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# AFLOAT WITH OLD GLORY

BY  
A BLUE JACKET  
OF  
THE OLD NAVY

THE  
**Abbey Press**

PUBLISHERS

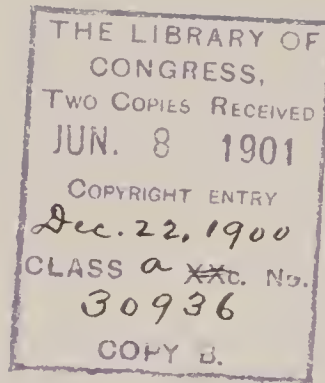
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## AFLOAT WITH OLD GLORY





Benjamin Warren, my brother and lifelong friend, shipmate in our boyhood's days, Lieutenant in the 6th Mass. V. I., of Baltimore fame, Captain in the 26th Mass. V. I., first commander of Fort St. Phillip after its surrender to the United States forces, and active participant in perilous service from the beginning to the end of the Civil War,—allow your name to be inscribed on this page as a token of a love, unbroken and increasing during more than seventy years of life's vicissitudes, between yourself and your brother,

THE AUTHOR.

*John Warren*



## NOTE

THE United States ship of the line *Columbus* sailed from New York June 4th, 1845, on a voyage around the world, visiting Rio de Janeiro, Canton, Amoy, Japan, Manila, the Hawaiian Islands, Callao, Valparaiso, Monterey, San Francisco and many other intermediate ports. The time occupied was two years and nine months. The scenes and incidents of the cruise form the groundwork of this poem, which was begun and nearly completed on the deck of the *Columbus*. It has been revised by the author and is here presented as a memorial of times and experiences now passed never to return.









H. V. WARREN

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

*Rev. Henry Vallette Warren was born in New England and inherited a spirit of adventure which was stimulated by the traditions of that locality, the result being his enlistment in the United States Navy while yet a lad. He visited South America, the East Indies, China and Japan some years before the opening of the latter country to the world. He participated in the operations of the navy during the Mexican War.*

*On quitting the navy he resumed his studies, taught school in New England and the West for some years, and for the last four decades has been a minister of the gospel, yet never losing his interest in the life of his early choice on the broad blue sea.*

THE PUBLISHERS.



## PREFACE

AFLOAT With Old Glory is a sea-book as unique in matter as in form. It is not the conventional recital of adventures and incidents of sea-life: these furnish a canvas for portraying the thoughts of a seaman who saw below their surface. Its outlook is from the standpoint of a man-of-war fifty years ago. Actually written on shipboard, it gives what may be called the undertone of life in the Old Navy, and its effect on the mind of a reflective sailor. Inasmuch as the conditions prevailing in the old United States sailing vessel will never be repeated, this memorial of such an experience is timely and will not soon be allowed to perish. An old shipmate writes: "You have given such word-pictures of our sea-life that when reading the book I felt as if I were back at the old ship's wheel with my eyes on the compass and the sound of the waves in my ears."

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# AFLOAT WITH OLD GLORY

## THE DEPARTURE

### I

Fair lay our ship in regal pride  
A monarch on the heaving tide,  
So trimly rigged in every part  
She seemed of more than human art,  
For not the keenest seaman's eye  
A fault in all her form could spy.  
Her decks were manned by hardy crew  
As ever plowed the ocean's blue,—  
With jest, and song, and mirth aglow,—  
Youth's ruddy signet on each brow,  
And all impatient for the day  
That called them from their homes away.  
At last it came; the welcome sound  
Bid eyes to flash and hearts to bound,  
And shouts to rise from gleeful men—  
“Welcome the open blue again!”  
“Up anchor all!” the boatswain cried!  
“Up anchor all!” his mates replied!  
The capstan manned, the nimble crew  
Hove the big anchor to the bow,  
The limp sails loosed and sheeted home—  
Our bows cut through a wreath of foam.

## II

Before we greet our homes again  
Long shall we plow the tossing main;  
Fair winds shall speed us many a day,  
Strong head-winds bar our chosen way,  
And spiteful squall and vicious gale  
Shall greet our ears with sullen wail.  
Our peerless flag on peaky spar,  
Of fiery stripe and burning star,  
In torrid air, in frigid sky,  
Shall languid droop or crackling fly  
While lone sea isles and peopled shores,—  
Wherever lookout's eye explores,—  
Muster their hordes to pause and gaze  
In wonder where those colors blaze,  
Proclaiming in the nation's van  
Columbia's brotherhood of man!  
The big old sun's resplendent flame  
Has not outrun Old Glory's fame!  
Our splendid ship, majestic, slow,  
Filled her loose sails above, below,  
As pausing thoughtful near the strand,  
She grieved to quit her native land;  
But when she heard the sea-wind's song  
Her vast bulk heaved,—she swept along,—  
The anchored light-house dared to spurn  
And Sandy Hook left far astern:  
Behind us land and mountain paled,—  
Straight for the far sea rim we sailed.

## The Departure

3

The fading coastline changed its hue,  
And veiled its forms in hazy blue,  
Till all its outlines from the eye  
In dreamy distance passed away.  
We look astern: our eyes no more  
Greet the green bay and pictured shore;  
That burdened wave no vista fills,  
Vexed by a thousand cleaving keels;  
Gone is that maze, so strange, so vast,  
Of rigging formed and spar and mast,  
And lost each hill, and spire, and dome,—  
The solid land we call our home,—  
The convex world with watery wall  
Has hid in dark oblivion all!

### III

Vainly we scan the pulsing plain,  
Our homes have melted in the main!  
Yet still upon the lowering sky  
Clings many a landsman's saddened eye.  
The youth who leaves his boyhood's home,  
And all he loves, the seas to roam,—  
As now he eyes the shoreless plain,  
What image fills his busy brain?  
In memory's pictured hall appears  
A happy scene of other years.  
Too lightly held, too cheaply sold,  
For gains by boyish dreams foretold:  
He sees a mother's falling tear,  
A sister's sigh invades his ear;



A Father's pleading words annoy  
The wild, unlistening, wayward boy,  
And thoughts of many a bygone day  
Along his pensive memory stray.  
How changed his view of what hath been  
Since it can never be again!  
What power shall teach us how to prize  
A happy home and kindred's ties  
Before we blindly turn away  
Where all is strange: alas the day!  
So thought wakes thought, a vivid train  
Bright with our early joys again.  
The friends of youth, our friends for aye,  
Again their dearest traits display  
And all conspire to draw a sigh  
As glides youth's dream forever by!  
Welcome the change to larger life,  
The girding for the waiting strife,  
The sense of power, the spirit free,  
The battle on!—reality!

## IV

O loving mother pressed with care  
As thy loved son, than life more dear,  
The silken tether of his home  
Impatient tries, resolved to roam;  
Despair not though thy darling boy  
Bereave thy heart of present joy;  
Thy faithful counsels, prayers and tears  
Are mingled with his youthful years:

## The Departure

5

Nor time nor distance can erase  
The memory of those precious days.  
The world may raise its mocking din,  
And Sirens tempt his heart to sin;  
His treacherous heart o'ercome his will  
And taste the honied sin, but still  
Thy form, thy voice, thy potent prayer  
Still as of old are present there!  
Hope, trust and pray, till life is done;  
Thy hand and God's, are on thy son!

### V

The land we cleared; the freshening blast  
Tugged at tense sail and bending mast,—  
Piped loud through all our proud array,  
And woke old ocean's minstrelsy.  
Our ship as bird or spirit brave  
Careened upon each yielding wave,  
Her snowy canvas swelled with pride  
Again to feel Old Neptune's tide,  
And by each roll and plunge expressed  
Joy in the life she loved the best.  
The blue waves all kept holiday,  
And tossed aloft bright jets of spray,  
Writhed, curved and coiled, like twisting shell,  
Or spiral vine in tropic dell.  
New life begins: with heart aglow  
We glance around, above, below—  
The world of waters is our home:  
As soldier treads at tap of drum

We greet life's fate, yield heart and will,  
With eager zest, for good or ill.  
Avast! then,—ship boy's girlish sigh!  
Hope's anchor holds—till seas are dry!  
The die is cast beyond recall—  
Our royal prize—earth's watery ball!  
Welcome thou deep and boundless sea,  
With all thy hidden mystery!

## VI

Through the vast hive a human swarm  
With rivalry routine makes warm.  
The mastman old, the antic boy,  
The sunbrowned salt, the landsman coy,  
Culled from earth's every tongue and clan  
All types display of vagrant man.  
Yet all to kindred ways incline,—  
Companions on the fitful brine;  
In labor one, in peril brave—  
True brethren of the peopled wave.  
From rough New England's rocky hills  
Comes many a lad whose bosom thrills  
With weird adventure's specious tale,  
Or crazed with passion to regale  
The eager eye, the hungry ear,  
With novelties to boyhood dear.  
What though a father's wisdom pleads,  
What though a mother's bosom bleeds,  
And sorrowing friends and kindred pray,  
And home's sweet accents whisper, stay!

## The Departure

7

What though a thousand perils throng  
Around his wake, of loss and wrong,  
From torrid sun, from arctic frost,  
From rending gale and wreckers' coast,  
Hunger and thirst, disease and pain,  
And sleepless nights and labor's drain,  
Augmented by despotic sway,  
And untold freaks of tyranny,  
Blasphemous speech, companions vile,  
And rags and wretchedness the while  
Life's poor reward; All, all are vain!  
Welcome the worst of wreck and pain!  
Shall danger thwart youth's daring will?  
He pants to test the power of ill!  
So, once afloat, ill fates abide;  
His manhood drifts with wind and tide  
Till, worn and broken, poor and old,  
Despoiled of strength and youthful mold,  
Regret, remorse, and grim despair,  
Make in his heart their hideous lair,  
And ceaseless chant the taunting strain—  
"As mortals sow they reap again."  
Thou too, O man! must reap thy grain  
At harvest home, in joy or pain!

## VII

Old Albion, moored by northern mere,  
With convoy vast of islands near,  
Rears many a tar in collier grim,  
In fishing smack, in liner trim,

In Indiaman, in ship of line,  
No royal banner's folds confine.  
The eager soul no monarch bars  
From realm illumed by freedom's stars:  
To manhood's deathless instinct true,  
Wherever floats the starry blue,  
Old ocean's sons a portion claim  
Beneath the stripes of light and flame!  
A huge three-decker! how shall pen  
Depict her horde of unlike men,  
Gleaned from all lands whose surfy shore  
Is vocal with the ocean's roar?  
The rough Norwegian, prompt in need,  
Is topmate with the hardy Swede  
And wizard Finn, whom salts declare  
Can do what mortals may not dare,—  
Can royals furl in tearing gale  
Nor touch with hand the flapping sail!  
The German, Dane and Russian grim,  
Uncouth in tongue, alert in limb,  
With Scotchmen strive in contest warm  
On quivering shroud and backed yardarm.  
Green Erin's sons with wit and song  
Enliven every midwatch throng;  
The Frenchman, gay as tropic sky,  
The Spaniard, dark with flashing eye,  
The Portuguese, whom none can know,  
Time honored feuds and strifes forego,  
And side by side as messmates share  
Growls, jests and rations:—spicy fare!  
Some in Italian valleys born



## The Departure

9

Play Yankee airs on pipe and horn,  
And even Turkey yields a son  
To man our battery's choicest gun.  
From Otaheite's wave-washed gem,  
And far Owyhae's foamy hem,  
Like drifting spume on ebbing tide,  
Grim want and chance their only guide,  
The friendless, houseless exiles come,  
Their one desire a wave-tossed home;  
And homes they find with gangway free  
To every wanderer of the sea;  
Not Congo's skin or crispy hair  
Is greeted with a challenge there.  
Outnumber these, full two to one,  
Our free-born men, each gallant son  
A hero's heir,—with oft a name  
Linked with our nation's early fame;  
Proud of his land and proud to wear  
The blue, the anchor and the star;  
Proud of his station at his gun  
And of his part in duty done:  
We hold the splendid past secure—  
Such heroes make our future sure!

## VIII

“What brings them here?” life's partial ways  
Ever divide: each wight obeys  
His angel's frown, or beck, and turns  
Where shadows gloom, or lovelight burns.

Who laid thy life-path, querist, say!  
Chose you that course one happy day  
All else rejecting? Backward glance  
And own thy debt to circumstance!  
Boyhood has heard adventure's tale,—  
Exultant spreads the venturous sail:  
Home has no charm to set him free  
Who feels the mystery of the sea!  
Men missing manhood's happy gain  
Of prosperous days: made half insane  
By loss and disappointment's sting,—  
Blind to the solace hope may bring,—  
Men blighted by their home's eclipse,  
Or thwarted by envenomed lips,  
From bitter world and record flee  
To seek oblivion on the sea,  
Where, record, kindred, name unknown,  
In Babel's crowd they live alone;  
Alone they die when all is done,  
Life's dismal secret told to none.  
But more respond to nature's cry—  
Ho! hungry mortals,—toil or die!  
Hail favored man whose eager hands  
Grasp labor's boon! Thrift, sordid, stands  
To blast the toiler, scant of skill,  
Who seeks a workman's place to fill!  
Wo! wo! befalls the needy clan  
The world needs not, but lays its ban  
On human nature's prime desire,—  
A friendly shelter, food and fire!  
Welcome the housed, the full, the clothed,—

## The Departure

11

The houseless, lean and bare are loathed:  
From the crammed homes of men they flee  
For succor to the kindly sea,  
And make the time-worn adage plain,—  
They change their place and keep the pain.

### IX

All hues and tongues a refuge find,  
Their native costume left behind:  
Arrayed in shining navy blue  
At drum-beat for the day's review,  
No prying eye or quizzing tongue  
Detects an alien in the throng.  
Toil danger, want and treacherous sea  
Assert a stern democracy:  
When yawns beneath a hungry wave  
Who scans the hand outstretched to save!  
Our twice four hundred jolly tars  
Claim kinship with the stripes and stars!  
On swaying yard, at booming gun,  
At weary watch, which none may shun;  
In crash of tempest, stress of gale,  
In reefing, furling, making sail,  
Find tasks that try nerve, strength and skill:  
Who stands the test with ready will  
Wins the proud boon of honest fame  
To crown with worth his humble name;  
What higher prize can knighthood yield,  
While thousands gaze, on bannered field!

## X

A world we are, afloat, afar  
From kindred worlds, a wandering star!  
A needy world: the cunning hand  
Of every art our needs demand.  
Each morning hour the tars begin  
Along the decks their various din.  
The noisy cooper drums his tune  
On leaky breaker's iron zone;  
The carpenters with line and plane  
Dress taper spars of toughest grain,  
And ashen oars, with shapely grace,  
To sweep the water's wavy face;  
The copper-smith, in smut and moil,  
On pumps and pipes spends endless toil;  
The rope-machine, with lusty will,  
Incessant sounds its noisy trill;  
The armorer's forge like Etna glows;  
His anvil rings with stalwart blows,  
As ringbolt huge and tackle hook  
Take form and curve beneath his stroke.  
Look fore and aft, or where you will,  
Mysterious tricks of sailor skill  
Go deftly on: wise tars employ  
Their lifetime lore with secret joy  
In strapping blocks—a cable's splice,  
A hawser's bend,—some quaint device  
For manrope's many-stranded maze,—  
Turk's-headed, pointed unknown ways:  
While gaskets, mats, and chafing gear,

And all the endless strain and wear  
Of rigging, boltrope, tattered sail,  
Claim cares and toils that never fail.

## XI

Nor these alone the hours employ  
Of greybeard salt and sailor boy  
Who the primeval craft pursue  
On snowy frocks and jackets blue,  
Or platting grasses' pliant spray  
For jaunty hat with ribbon gay.  
The artist plies his skill and grace  
Tattooing lines, no years efface,  
On rounded arm or broad, bare breast,—  
A volant eagle's lordly crest;  
Hope with her anchor, Freedom's shield,  
Old Glory's folds and starry field,  
Initials, birth-date, Cross Divine;  
Perchance some precious name's outline  
Whose secret bides with one alone  
Till memory, thought and hope are flown.  
" Barbarian fools! their forms to mar,  
Like Zealand's chiefs, with inky scar!"  
Hold, virtuous friend! Hope's steadfast form  
Heartens the soul in direst storm;  
Proud of his flag, its starry glow  
Gleams on his breast for friend,—or foe!  
That secret name may courage lend  
When the sore heart most needs a friend;  
Birth-date and name make dumb appeal

When the dead lips no clew reveal;  
And Calvary's Cross may haply crave  
And win, on alien shores, a grave.  
Not pictured freaks! these markings lend  
Their pathos to the sailor's end!  
" Muse they on death, like cloistered nun? "  
Landsman, avast! the picture done  
Once for all time, the sailor sings  
Like bird that soars on happy wings.  
Himself, his ship, in placid day  
He dresses for the stormy fray:  
When mind and skill have done their best  
Fear is dismissed: God does the rest  
When the death-laden gale comes on!  
Hast thou, O Landsman, wiser done?

## XII

" What groups are these? " Since time began  
Has busy, curious, patient man  
Doted on tasks whose art and skill  
Alone reward his tireless will:  
Thro' all the long-drawn labor lives  
The joy the finished triumph gives.  
One slowly builds with plodding care  
A model warship—wondrous fair,—  
From truck to keel a faultless form  
As ever battled wave and storm.  
One wreaths a lanyard's twisted strands,—  
A tangled coil in landsman's hands,—  
But to a seaman's practiced eye



## The Departure

15

A master-piece no price can buy!  
Some geniuses their taste regale  
On tooth and bone of shark and whale;  
On rosy conch-shells sounding whorl,  
On irised curve of fairy pearl  
Transformed to shapely brooch or ring  
And many a rare and labored thing,  
Etched, polished, kept for unknown use  
Or souvenir of a famous cruise.  
So toil the tars for labor's sake,—  
Dear soothing balm for hearts that ache!  
So God his universe sustains:  
So man his origin explains.  
Near some brisk reader closely cling  
The silent tars, a charmed ring,  
While Dickens' mirth and Cooper's tale  
Challenge the listening crowds—All hail!  
On sea or land,—or where you will,  
Our toils and sports are human still.

### XIII

'Tis Sabbath morn; six bells have rung;  
Peajackets all aside are flung;  
Rough, tatooed legs and arms are bared,—  
All hands for scrubbing decks prepared.  
Some snugly trice the coiling gear;  
Waisters the fore-hatch tackle clear;  
Forthwith ascend from dingy hold  
Buckets and fixtures manifold,  
And holystones and flinty sand



From Coney Island's surfy strand.  
All decks afloat! Astir all hands!  
Of each his task the hour demands.  
Wo! we! betide the luckless drone  
Who shirks the lively holystone!  
A bucket's contents, swift and chill,  
Quickly persuades the wavering will,  
And few who once the lesson learn  
Again require the teaching stern!  
The brooms and stones, with gritty sand,  
Grind clean and smooth each curving band  
That marks each plank and pitchy seam  
Until like jet and snow they gleam:  
Nor cease the tars till belted mast,  
The capstan's head of ponderous brass,  
Each ringbolt huge, each pike of steel,—  
The binnacle, the spangled wheel,  
Belaying pins and nice design  
On hatch and rail, with silvery shine,  
In morning's sunlight flash and burn,—  
Sign of the Sabbath day's return.

## XIV

To quarters beat the noisy drums;  
Prompt at the call each sailor comes  
In snowy white and shining blue,  
For muster strict and stern review,  
As round the capstan, one by one,

## The Departure

17

They pass the ordeal none may shun.  
If seas are smooth and skies are fair  
We rig the church for praise and prayer.  
For seats we range the capstan's bars  
On match-tubs low and vacant spars;  
A shot-box pulpit deftly made,  
With bunting's drooping folds arrayed,  
Prayer Book and Bible all in place,  
Announce arrived the hour of grace.  
Responsive to the boatswain's call  
The tars abaft the mainmast fall,  
And gather near the spangled stand  
With heads all bared, a reverent band.  
From gunroom, wardroom, cabin, come  
Officials gay with lace and plume,—  
Belted marines with burnished crest,  
Faultless for gala Sabbath dressed.  
In solemn robes, with serious face,  
The Chaplain seeks the sacred place;  
His soft, slow syllables of prayer  
Fall gently on each waiting ear,—  
“The Lord His Holy Temple fills!”  
The startling thought each murmur stills,  
And, as the solemn accents fall  
Like music tones, the hearts of all  
Confess the strange, subduing power  
Of sacred truth and holy hour.  
A transient gleam of good! alas!  
Dim glances meet the Spirit's glass!  
Of precious truth, on land or sea,  
Forgetful hearers all are we!

## XV

Vain were the task to follow on  
Our bark through changing calm and storm,  
For fickle winds will rage and sleep  
And rule with sportive power the deep;  
No mood less welcome than the lull  
Of death that broods the glassy swell,  
And binds the ship with unseen chain  
A restless prisoner on the main,  
Plunging and rolling to and fro  
As tortured by internal throe,  
And flapping every useless sail,  
That woos in vain the sleeping gale.  
In solemn midnight, still and clear,  
The reef points patter on the ear  
So like a roof when beat with rain  
Our musings bear us home again.  
Hail happy time! in night's still hour  
To listen to the murmuring shower,  
When falls above our mossy loft  
The muffled drops, subdued and soft;  
So sweet the lullaby they sing  
It frees the spirits' festive wing  
To float away in fragrant air  
Filled with delights of dreamland fair.  
So we in boyhood's happy day  
Well knew enchantments' mighty sway!  
And so in after time we found  
Remembered music in the sound.  
Mysterious power! those memoirs all

## The Departure

19

The pattering reef points now recall;  
They float through many a dainty dream  
As fair as spring in morning's beam,  
And friends, and home, and love and tears,—  
The treasured gems of all the years,  
Conspire to charm the sea boy's brain,—  
Alas! how keen the waking pain!

### XVI

Days passed: the ocean we had spanned;  
Rose to our view a foreign land  
In the dim mist of distance veiled  
Which all its rugged lines concealed.  
Cape Frio's headland rends the veil;  
Piled mountains rear their rocky mail;  
Their peaky tops, afar and near,  
Like guards on fortress wall appear.

Mark now, how wild the pulses fly  
As stranger shores first greet the eye!  
How every stripling, ocean child  
Scans those blue mountains, vast and wild,  
Till in mid air they rise and swim,  
As keenest vision waxes dim!  
We backed our sails till morning's ray  
The distant vapors burned away,  
Then at our peak our banner flew,—  
The quivering stripes and twinkling blue,—  
Our guns with thunder shook the sky,

The hills in thunder gave reply;  
We braced our yards and bore away  
To enter Rio's placid bay.

## XVII

We passed the cone, to seaman's eye  
A noble landmark, bold and high;  
Huge walls we passed and fortress mound  
With ranking cannon grimly crowned;  
Brazil's proud flag drooped fold on fold,—  
The crown, the cross, the green, the gold;  
We joined a fleet that anchored lay,  
From Britain, Spain and far Norway:  
Old Holland's flag was gleaming there,—  
The Frenchman's wooed the drowsy air:  
Three three mizzen peaks exultant flew  
The white, the red, the starry blue,  
In ripple, wave and gorgeous roll:—  
Mysterious sign! each sailor soul  
Saw home's dear land, supremely fair,  
Smile in Old Glory's splendor there!  
The plunging anchor smote the waves  
That flashed like snow: as cyclone raves,  
Raved through the hawse the mighty chain  
That held,—as holds the charger's rein.  
Our sails collapsed; foot, leech and clue  
Aloose on stay and yardarm blew;  
Nimbly aloft the topmen ran,—  
Like sparrows lighting on a span  
Of drooping wire, the reckless tars

## The Departure

21

Dotted the booms and taper spars,—  
Like magic of Arabian tale,  
Taut was each rope and furled each sail!  
A burst of music, loud and clear,  
Columbia's "Hail," thrilled heart and ear;  
Our ponderous guns, with crashing sound  
Again awoke the hills around;  
From ship, fort, city o'er the tide  
Gay visitors in barges glide,  
In naval garb, in martial sheen,  
Spangled and starred with gold and green,  
With ladies fair,—that gladness bring  
Like laughing flowers in blithsome spring,—  
Aflame with flags and pennons gay—  
The pageantry of gala day!  
A passing show, a pomp displayed  
By warriors grim in masquerade.

## XVIII

What mortal skill shall paint the scene,  
Rio! thy hills of quivering green!  
Where artist long might feast his eye  
On peaks whose heads invade the sky,  
In fireclouds robed:—at night's return  
The tropic lightnings ceaseless burn.  
Where lower slopes the mountain side  
Redundant nature flaunts her pride;  
Strange plants and vines luxuriant creep  
Round creviced rocks and dizzy steep,  
And drape the slope in greenest hue



Beneath dim crag and heaven's bright blue.  
And lower still the rugged ground  
Juts forth in rock and bushy mound  
With convent perched upon its crest,—  
A lonely height for vestal's rest.  
Around the building's massive towers  
Are tangles vast of trees and flowers  
That screen the pile from prying sight,  
Save old bell tower and flecks of white  
That glimmer through the sylvan shroud  
As gleams the moon through fleecy cloud.

## XIX

Oh! could you view this glassy tide  
Where ships of every navy ride,  
Where every blazoned flag appears,  
Fraught with the nations' storied years,  
And deeds of martial valor done  
Wherever glows the circling sun,  
Till burning pictures throng the brain  
And the world's drama lives again  
In forms of life, in hues of flame,—  
Man's causeless, endless, maddening game!  
Welcome the day of war's decline!  
When spears shall prune the trailing vine,  
Swords yield the share their burnished steel,  
And foes the ties of kinship feel!  
A lovelier scene when sinks the sun,  
When ruder sounds of day are done,—  
When pours the moon her mellow light



## The Departure

23

On stately ship and water bright,  
And breezes from the mountain side  
Sow thick with stars that wondrous tide,—  
When far-off music, soft and clear,  
Comes stealing to the listening ear,—  
When, one by one, each vessel's bell  
Peals solemnly the midnight knell,  
And sentries pass the thrilling call  
In guardian tones, " All's well ! " " All's well ! "  
When dawn attests the coming sun,  
With stunning crash the morning gun,  
And rattling drums the silence mar ;  
Night's soothing music flies afar,—  
Our dreamy fancies end their play,—  
Awakes at once the jarring day.  
What power can shield our transient joy  
One moment from the world's annoy !

## XX

In tropic climes, this earth around,  
Can one to match thy wealth be found,  
O Rio ! rich in fruits untold,—  
The orange, bright as glowing gold,—  
The cocoanut, whose milky spring  
To ebbing strength will flood-tide bring,—  
Bananas fair in clustering sheen,  
Enclosed in rind of gold and green,—  
Pineapples, limes, a dainty feast ;  
Alike to eye and raptured taste ;  
Thy fruitage fair, O tropic vales,

With wondrous power each sense regales.  
But haste away! the time has come  
When we must seek our watery home:  
Fair gales have wakened from their sleep,—  
Bright skies invite us to the deep:  
In lands enchanted brief our stay!  
Old Neptune beckons us away!

## THE EAST INDIES

### I

At cathead grim our anchor hung,  
Wide to the winds our sails were flung;  
In stately grace, majestic, free,  
We plunged into the tumbling sea!  
Our gallant ship with instinct true  
Felt the wild waves that wilder grew,  
Her giant form upreared with pride  
And dashed the hissing foam aside,  
Now wreathed in spray of rainbow hue,  
Now white as frost on wintry bough.  
As the brave seabird, tempest borne,  
Rises and sinks amid the storm,  
So reeled our ship her sides to lave  
In wild Atlantic's drenching wave!

### II

Due eastward heads our wheelman now,  
Where winds and waves no truce allow,  
Where squadron's torn by angry gale  
Stagger beneath their shortened sail.  
Our staunch three-decker tore a way

Thro the vast waters' angry fray,  
Crushed the big waves with plunge and roll  
Unswerving from her helm's control,  
Till colder winds from icy seas  
Rudely dismissed the tropic breeze,  
Roused far and near the mighty boom  
Of polar storm whose solemn gloom  
Above, below, around, we saw,  
And felt the elemental war.

## III

We greeted gallant fleets that bore  
Homeward the wealth of orient shore,—  
Silks, gems and pearls of price untold  
Weighed in an even scale with gold;  
And brave old craft whose daring sail  
Marauds the home of maddened whale.  
Was knighthood's nerve a nobler boon  
Than his who plunged the keen harpoon,  
When frenzied flukes mixed boiling sea,  
Lance, lines, boats, men, in wild melee?  
On flew our ship: her plunging bow  
Neared the famed Cape where tempests blow,  
In teeth of storm where helm and sail,  
Tho' manned by skill, can scarce prevail.  
Still flew she on: her rolling sides  
Were laved in Good Hope's massy tides  
Whose solemn march, sublimely grand,  
Seems like the swell of moving land

As ridges vast, and concaves, form  
Beneath the strong Antarctic storm.  
Behold! a mile-wide valley bends!  
See now! that vale a mountain stands!  
Look up! the billows round us rise,—  
Their curving tops are in the skies;  
Again, we rise on billowy brow,  
The waters slope afar, below!  
Herein is motion's mystery,—  
The heave and yawn of mighty sea,—  
A universe of awful power,  
And man, the phantom of an hour,  
At his wits end, and fate alone  
Usurps the seat of mind o'erthrown,  
Confounding sight, and sense, and will,  
Where nothing is an instant still.  
But for the mighty hearts that glow  
In brave old tars who challenge wo!

## IV

Wild are thy gales with weird alarms  
To thrill the heart, thou Cape of Storms!  
When leering through the gloom of night  
Pale phantoms chill our blood with fright;  
When rushing on in rending gale,  
The Fying Dutchman crowds all sail,  
Manned by his crew of spectres grim,  
With eyeless skull and bony limb!  
Wild are thy nights, with terrors wild,

To superstitious ocean child;  
Lost spirits ride each billow's crest;  
Spectres rush by on every blast,  
And swooping flap the pallid wing,  
While rain, winds, waves, a chorus sing!  
Still, tis a lifelong joy to see  
One midnight sea's wild revelry!

## V

These sights and sounds yield fruitful theme  
Of haunted ship, and goblin grim,  
Of mermaids' voice, and spirits' cry  
That haunt the wave: they wildly fly  
And scream, in seabirds' spectral form,  
Piercing the tumult of the storm,—  
We think perforce of shipwrecked men,  
Half hear their drowning shriek again!  
With close-reefed wing, like frigate's sail,  
They tireless breast the mighty gale,  
Or curving down the hollow wave  
Seem seeking out a seaman's grave.  
O wiser landsman! what if thou  
A sea-life lone had'st lived till now!  
Where then thy wealth of knowledge fair?  
Thy world of secret truth laid bare?  
Thy steady nerve of science born?  
Of lowly tars, thy lofty scorn?  
Where then thy mind from spectres free,  
And all thy fine philosophy!

## VI

With bending mast and straining shroud,  
Our ship the foamy furrow plowed  
Where St. Paul's isle its peak uprears,  
Sombre and sad with briney tears, —  
A mighty pile no step can scale,  
Buttressed with adamantine mail,  
Where rush, and foam, and spray, and roar,  
Encircle all the wave-beat shore.  
Rude storms assail, but vainly all,  
To fret and wear that seagirt wall.  
Forever firm its base shall stand  
As builded by Almighty Hand,  
And silent in the lonely deep  
Millions of midnight watches keep!  
A sentry grey whose flowing shroud  
Is formed by many a changing cloud,  
While lighter mists, in sunlit bloom,  
Deck his bold crown with martial plume.  
On sailed our bark: the passing day  
Saw Paul's isle fading far away;  
When next the sun, in fiery red,  
Rose burning from his watery bed,  
Naught but the blended sea and sky  
Greeted the gaze of wistful eye.

## VII

Northeastward on the wave afar  
The wheelman cons his pilot star



As on we sail, and ever on,  
Till warmer seas our keel has won,  
Where thunder, lightning, cloud and rain,  
Exulting rule their vast domain,—  
Where tropic isles' eternal spring  
Inspire the sea-worn heart to sing;  
Where flowering branches trail the tide,  
Wasting their odors far and wide;  
And brooding clouds of forest green,  
Flooded and steeped in noontide sheen;  
And tinted sky, and ocean blue,  
Yield shades and forms forever new.  
Soft breezes blow,—warm rain distills,—  
Oh, how unlike our own cold hills,  
Our bleak east winds, our rugged clime,—  
This glimpse of earth's unfallen prime!  
Old Eden's slopes and vales return!  
Old Eden's colors round us burn!  
Oh! speaks in truth the ravished eye—  
Or is it all a phantasy!  
Some mirage of the tricky air,—  
A fleeting dream, a vision rare,  
Reflected from the peerless clime  
Whose shores gleam not with sands of time!  
Oh, if such scenes can linger here,  
How must the Better World appear!

## VIII

So near the sea the verdure springs  
That round its roots the wavelet sings;

For barrier firm appears no strand,  
No beach of shells and starry sand  
But pedant bough and trailing vine  
With seaweeds sombre green entwine,—  
A tangled maze of network fair,  
In water part, and part in air.  
Old Java looms a glorious isle  
With splendor in her floral smile;  
Her flagrant breezes softly play  
Through groves whose garlands bloom alway;  
Sumatra, too, with wasteful hand  
Bespangles all her spicy land,  
With form, and tint, and light and shade,  
That ever charm and never fade:  
Nor these alone: fruits, luscious, rare,  
Abundant, claim no mortals care.  
O tropic isles! what men aspire  
To claim thy wealth beyond desire?  
What happy people see expand  
Their birthright in this fairy land!  
Ho, sea boy! loathing meagre fare;  
Worn with thy constant night watch care;  
Tired of the sound of tumbling foam,  
Here wilt thou seek a restful home?  
No fairer clime woos tropic gale!  
None deadlier broods the Upas vale!

## IX

Mid these enchanted isles our stay  
A vision seems: they pass away

Like cloudflecks from the radiant west  
Of amber, gold, and amethyst.  
They pass, but other gems appear,  
In distance dim, and clinging near,  
Of sunlit blush, of greenest dye—  
A sky above,—below a sky,  
Between, a wavy, restless line,—  
O wondrous world! O thought divine!  
We, sliding like a cloudlet white  
Along our track of viewless light,  
By gentle airs, on genial sea,  
Soon left them fading far alee,  
Like floating tufts of mossy grass  
On undulating sea of glass.  
But why attempt a tale to tell  
That fancy never formed too well;  
For all that ever bard has sung,  
And all the lore of traveller's tongue,  
Or witchcraft wild in fairy theme  
Would fail to paint this daylight dream.

## X

Vain are dull words to bid one see  
The life that gleams in grove and tree,  
Whose gorgeous hues of fire and gold  
Bid rainbow tints turn dull and cold.  
Nor could a mortal's power display  
The secrets of a coral sea  
Whose limpid depths in part reveal

The miracle they still conceal.  
Moss, shrubs and flowers of growing stone,  
The caverned hall, the jewelled throne,  
The fortress tower, the turret fair,  
And many a shape of beauty rare,  
Festooned with sprays of tangled vine  
That waves and twists in deep-sea brine—  
O for some power to plunge the wave  
And all its unknown perils brave,  
And all the secrecy explore  
Of the mysterious ocean floor!  
Floats up that phantasy again  
Of caves not seen by living men;  
Of mermaids' bowers where amber grows,  
Where the drowned sea-boy's limbs repose.  
Shall all come true—that schoolboy theme—  
The hammock sleep—the midnight dream—  
The waking, storm, and wreck, and doom?  
Put by the thought! dismiss the gloom!  
Life, young and gay, exults,—replies,  
“Whoever falls, I win life's prize!”  
The dead are dead:—the living sing  
As Hope expands her fearless wing.  
And yet what art of human hand  
Could build a sepulchre more grand?  
What earthly loom or artist's skill  
Could weave a pall so clinging, chill,  
As weed-veined water—that dense fold  
No hand can raise, no power control?  
Could fitter column ever rise  
Above the spot where manhood lies,  
Than coral rock, with branch and bloom,

To beautify the last, long home  
Where sailors rest in ocean's bed  
Till earth and sea give up their dead?

## XI

Mistclad Batavia's lowland's dun,  
Steaming with heats of tropic sun,  
With every feature strongly new,  
As on we sailed, came full in view.  
Vast canebrake marshes spread afar  
Like spears by millions ranked for war;  
Above, a mistcloud, pale and dim,  
Spread to the landscape's farthest rim;  
At sunset, Jack o'lantern's light  
Played witchcraft with the sultry night,  
Slow wending on its gruesome round  
As spirits haunt a burial ground.  
Those million spears! are warlike hosts  
By campfires massed!—grim, hostile ghosts?  
Ay!—pale disease, forever nigh,  
With dimness veils the flashing eye;  
Miasmas dire, and poisoned air,—  
Death's minions all, are active there,  
And, night and day, the dismal grave  
Gapes for her dead no skill could save.  
O who will risk his form to lay  
Forgotten in this sweltering clay  
When the old sea with kind refrain  
Invites our confidence again!

XII

“Up anchor all! up and farewell  
 Ye lands where men half naked dwell;  
 Away on happy wings we flee,  
 God’s Country is the land for me!”  
 Well said, O Sailor! Happy choice  
 For worthy man! Rejoice! Rejoice!  
 And note what makes thy home so fair  
 And Orient islands thy despair;  
 And note if, all this earth around,  
 One solitary spot is found  
 To satisfy sublimest life  
 With mother, sister, child and wife,  
 Save where God’s Book has shed its ray  
 And brought the light of Christian Day!  
 And thou, wise sceptic, pause and see  
 Thy debt to One unknown to thee!

XIII

Tell if thou canst the secret spell  
 That Eden brings where raged a hell  
 Thro’ all the generations old,  
 When Island Chiefs, in wars untold,  
 Killed captured men, as hunters game,  
 For feast infernal. Who shall name  
 The fate of luckless, shipwrecked men  
 On devil-haunted islands then!  
 The wise old sailor knew the power



That gave him life in awful hour  
When his good ship the coral's fang  
Had gnawed and wrecked. A keener pang  
Pierced him as, struggling from the wave,  
He risked the island's power to save.  
Low crouching in the tropic shade  
He scaled a hilltop,—saw displayed  
A valley wide with gardens green  
And groves and cottage homes between,  
And,—could it be! O joy to tell!  
A chapel spire! its Sabbath bell  
Rang out blithe music on the air—  
Not home itself was half so fair!  
He shouted back,— “ Shipmates! Good Cheer!  
The Old Oahn Sky Pilot's here! ”

## XIV

Life, food and safety,—love divine,  
The living flotsam of the brine  
Their welcome found. Nor this alone:—  
A sailor lad whose youth had known  
A christian home's supreme bequest,  
Yet roamed a prodigal unblest,  
Still dripping with salt sea spray  
And bruised and bleeding, made his way  
Up to the chapel's open door  
Whence issued music, heard before  
In early home,—the words,—the tune,—  
“ Old Ortonville.” A day in June,  
Long years ago, returned again,—



Home, father, mother, friends,—and then  
The girl who sang, young, pure and fair,—  
She seemed an angel singing there!  
The vision fled. The holy hour  
Thrilled his rapt soul with awful power,  
Revived new manhood's noble form,  
Swept by the Spirit's mighty storm.  
And yet! And yet! O shame to tell!  
Wide travelled men who know right well  
The Teachers of the Holy Name  
Return to curse them and defame!

## XV

A timely wind from off the land  
Our cordage thrilled, our hot brows fanned;  
The glass forsook the water's face,—  
Dimples and tremors filled its place;  
Idlers, for once, are all aglow,  
And lubbers rushing to and fro!  
From top, and yard, and deck, and stay,—  
Aswarm like bees in flowery May,—  
The notes, confused, of sailor din  
Through all the rigging's maze begin.  
The speaking trumpet's brazen throat  
Blares fore and aft its roughest note;  
The creaking block, the "Yo heave O!"  
The boatswain's challenge, "Start and go!"  
The halliard's roar, the tramping feet,  
The flapping sail, the rushing sheet,  
The rising yard, the swaying boom,

The gurgling bow in beds of foam,  
Are sounds more sweet than music's strain  
As seeks our ship the friendly main!  
Seen through the night her fleecy form  
A spirit seems that haunts the storm,  
Enlarging as the billows rise  
Her misty form to mountain size,  
Then, reeling, sinking from her height  
Seems vanishing from mortal sight.  
The tumult ceased: like noiseless time  
We left astern the infected clime,  
And when dull midnight's bell had tolled  
Batavia's fogs far leeward rolled,  
Where is thy sail, O man of skill,  
That bears thee from thy threatening ill!  
Where spreads afar that sunny sea  
Where burdens fall, and hearts are free!  
And where the final port—once won—  
Peace everlasting is begun!

## XVI

Through sunbright seas our track has been,—  
Now sombre shades and glooms begin,  
And flitting forms from spirit land  
Foreshadow death's intrusive hand.  
Nor falsely do these signs foretel  
The death stroke in the evening bell.  
A sailor's stormy voyage is done,—  
Noon is surprised by setting sun!  
No more his clarion voice shall guide

Our tossing ship on threatening tide ;  
No more haul down the struggling sail  
When falls the shock of sudden gale.  
Hushed is his voice, and stilled the pain  
That tortured nerve and throbbing brain.  
The frenzy of his latest strife  
Was the fit end of stormy life,—  
He shouted, as in gusty fray,  
With dying breath—" Belay ! " " Belay ! "  
The storm was hushed,—the spirit fled—  
The martial rites of honored dead  
Seemed poor and futile at the bier  
Where kindred shed no mournful tear.  
His manly form received its due,—  
Its pall the stripes and starry blue,—  
And when into the deep it fell,  
Three volleys pealed the last farewell !  
Think not, O sea ! to claim thy prize,  
Though in thy keeping long it lies ;  
This precious dust shall Christ demand  
When the last trump thrills sea and land,—  
So keep this clay, keep every shred,  
And then, O sea ! give up thy dead !

## XVII

Was the inconstant sea secure?  
From fatal envoy—safe, and sure?  
O not for us the healing wave!  
No ocean air has power to save!

Death's vial, by divine decree,  
The angel pours on every sea!  
Not singly strokes of sorrow come;  
In groups we mortals meet our doom!  
Again a note of sadness fell  
On merry hearts from tolling bell,  
And the blue jack, with loving fold,  
Draped a stout sailor—silent—cold.  
O shipmate dear! what lot was thine  
So soon to sleep in ocean's brine!  
For scarce had manhood's days begun  
Than sank in night thy morning sun!  
As rainbows fade from mounting spray  
Faded thy fairest hopes away,  
Thy spirit joined the flitting band  
Whose footsteps press the unknown strand.  
I knew thee well when pleasure's wiles,  
Enwreathed thy face with sunny smiles;  
I saw thee in thy later day,  
When pain had chased those smiles away;  
And when grew short thy latest breath  
I sadly saw thy cot of death;  
I saw thee plunge into thy grave  
And o'er thee close the hungry wave!  
His story ends: his cruise is done;  
In vain we mourn the widow's son.  
Afar from home, from native land,  
No mother checked life's wasting sand;  
No sister's voice, in accents mild,  
Soothed his poor spirit's visions wild,—  
But with rough wanderers of the wave  
He died, and found a sailor's grave.

## XVIII

With wary eye, ahead, alee,  
We sail a sea of treachery!  
Where coiling winds and frantic gale  
Rend into shreds the hempen sail;  
Where naked ship, no single hour,  
Could breast the typhoon's awful power;  
Bare mast and spar it sweeps away  
Like wind-blown chaff in wintry day.  
The elements with stubborn force  
Disputed long our chosen course,  
Yet, though the wind in fury blew,  
Obedient to her skillful crew,  
Our sea-boat reared her giant form  
Prouder as wilder raged the storm  
And clouds of foam hurled from her brow  
Like avalanche of mountain snow!  
Exult O man! thy skill sublime  
Winds, waves subdued, of every clime!

## SUNRISE LANDS

### I

Once more we heard the land-bird sing,  
Rested aloft its weary wing  
And Wantung's ruined fortress wall,  
Where green boughs wave and shadows fall,  
Revealed their spotty fronts of white  
Like snowclad pines in morning light.  
Ill-starred Celestials! Vantage ground,  
And flanking walls and bastion mound  
And antique guns disposed betwixt  
Huge blocks of masonry and fixed  
Immovable:—O what were they  
To match the foes of poor Cathay,  
When the old dragon flag, unfurled,  
Gave challenge to the Western World?  
Chained to their useless guns they found  
Their forts but tombs with ruin crowned.  
Crushed is their power: their gongs are dumb  
Their forts the soldier's last, long home:  
Where once the silken flag blew free  
Wave in the breezes, bush and tree,  
Whose shadows trail on broken stones  
That cover their defender's bones,  
A sordid power that wrought their wo,  
Might hurling right in overthrow,—



Mammon the prize: thro' all the years  
Power wrings from weakness blood and tears.  
Wo to thee England! Doom's decree  
Has named a judgment day for thee;  
Nor fleets nor armies can avail  
To hold aslant God's even scale.  
For every coin thy coffers hold,  
Gained by thy drug in Sinim sold,  
Thy gluttoned pouch shall vomit twain  
For curses blast thy guilty gain.  
Nor this alone: some set doomsday  
For each slain child of poor Cathay  
A goodly son of thine shall die:  
The sentence is decreed on high.  
Ho! spoiler of the weakling lands!  
As God is just the debit stands!  
Alas!—sad truth for thinking men,—  
Poor Sinim's spoilers proudly then  
In sculptured tomb shall lie alone  
While blameless sons their wrong atone.  
And yet, O realm supremely brave,  
Where'er thy blazoned crosses wave  
Life is secure and man is free,—  
Long may thy squadron's guard the sea!

## II

With lazy winds we slowly glide  
Up the broad Canton's yellow tide  
Alive with fleets from lands remote,

44            Afloat With Old Glory

High masted, hugest hulks that float,  
And motley craft of varied form  
For weathering wave and tropic storm,  
And clumsy junks, uncouth and strange,  
Queer house-boat homes and boats that range  
The waves with nets for scaly prey,—  
Swift carriers racing leagues away,  
And centipedes, like living things,  
With five score oars for fins and wings,—  
Trade boats with curios stored within  
And splendid barge of Mandarin.  
The puny fleet,—like midget swarm,—  
Gave way before the warship's form;  
A quiet nook our pilot found,  
Sheltered by hills and capes around,  
Two anchors dropped and, mooring fast,  
Safe guarded all from tide and blast.  
While thus secure our warship lies  
A busy hand each seaman plies;  
Each threadlike rope and taper spar,—  
Like spider's web in ambient air,—  
Is beaded with the agile crew—  
O thrills not every heart to view!  
Yet fearless, thoughtless, I opine,  
As spider on his shining line!  
Down came the maze of running gear,—  
Sheet, halliard, brace, in swift career;  
From yard and boom each useless sail,—  
The jaunty spars, the network frail;  
Top and topgallant masts descend,  
And stays and backstays all unbend,  
Till like some time-worn, fortress wall

The lone hulk lay, dismantled all!  
O'er her vast length the moaning breeze  
Sang as of winter's leafless trees,  
Or of the autumn's saddening hour  
When frost has nipped the vineclad bower.

## III

But see again, through netted shrouds,  
Masts, needle pointed, pierce the clouds,  
With yards across and cordage trim  
Like spider's web on naked limb!  
Trimmed fore and aft in naval pride,  
She sits arrayed like winsome bride,  
Impatient to resume her way  
Amid the salt waves leaping spray.  
Like organ keys of jet and snow  
Gleam her grim ports—a curving row—  
Whence, ready charged for battle's call,  
Loom threatening guns, a treble wall,—  
Those engines huge whose thunders fling  
The iron globe on ruin's wing.  
And deadlier forms of war's wild din  
Slumber that vessel's hold within  
Which, kindled by a nation's ire,  
Deal devastation, wreck and fire,  
When battle's mask conceals the sun—  
And broadsides thunder, gun on gun,—  
When crystal waves blush red and glow,—  
What awful secrets they must know!

## IV

O Canton River! where away  
Can mortals match thy quaint display  
Of floating craft, grotesque in build,  
With human freight so strangely filled!  
A peopled wave, from shore to shore,  
With boats by thousands: sail and oar,  
In every form, incessant plied  
Athwart the turbid rivers tide.  
Men, women, children,—every age,  
With the celestial heritage  
Of trailing cue, and slant set eyes,  
And faces tinged with yellow dyes,—  
All eager, active, keenly brave,  
To win subsistence from the wave!  
O wise celestials! boats with eyes  
To see their way, when darkening skies  
Bring on black night and joss-sticks burn,  
A glimmering spark, till day's return,  
And all are safe! Who then shall say  
The man profane is wise as they?  
What contest sore of hand and brain,  
With cruel fate these men maintain,  
So many they; so hungry all.—  
The daily store so strangely small!  
They fetch, and carry, sell, and buy,  
They fish the depths for finny fry,—  
With scoop net skim the water's face,  
And constant watch for every trace  
Of fuel, food, or thing of use

Their world of waters may produce;  
Their tiny boat their only home  
From infant days till death shall come.  
Where breathe the men whose lore and skill,  
From means so small, such wants can fill!  
Nor this alone: on gala day  
The sportive feelings leap and play;  
With flaming hues, on stern, and bow,  
And stumpy mast, and slanting prow,  
Their boats like tulip gardens glow,  
And swarms of lanterns crown the show.  
Wise as our own, their noisy cheer  
With welcome greets the glad new year,  
When Chinese crackers,—millions strong,  
Their blissful jubilee prolong!  
Hail brothers all! your cracking toys  
Charm millions of our merry boys!  
Our July Day how dull and tame  
Without the sulphurous snap and flame!

## V

Ten months' routine has passed away  
Since sunset on our sailing day;  
No message since had reached our ear  
From home—no slightest word of cheer.  
Yet hope, to hungry hearts so true,  
Cheered us each day with promise new,  
Till one glad morn appeared a sail—  
A clipper strained by storm and gale.

Her rigging bleached by wave and spray  
That drenched her decks for many a day.  
The morning breezes fondly rolled,  
In starlit curl and glowing fold,  
Columbia's banner! glory's sign!  
Long may those heaven-born colors shine!  
Each homesick heart the signal knew,  
And frenzy seized the shouting crew!  
"News!" "news from home!" mad voices  
cried:  
"Hurra!" a hundred throats replied!  
"Clear quick the boat!" The tars reply—  
"All ready!" "Lower!" "Ay, Ay!" "Ay,  
Aye!"

The davit falls with fury rave  
Till kiss the keel and pouting wave;  
In mettle high the boat's crew keen  
With oars erect in place are seen:  
"Let fall!" "Give way!" A sudden plash,  
Quick foaming whorls and oarblades flash,  
And on the tide the wave-borne car  
Trails its bright wake like shooting star!  
The brawny arms in concert strain,  
The ashen oarblades bend amain.  
The rowlocks groan in measured note,  
Then faintly die: the lessening mote  
Rests in the clipper's sheltering lee,  
Receives her prize and, wild with glee,  
Flies homeward with her precious freight  
On which all gaze with eyes elate.  
Not long do they impatient stand,—  
The pouch despoiled, each address scanned,



Responsive to the shouted name  
The exulting tars their treasures claim!

## VI

Who that has left his land and home,  
In alien lands and seas to roam,  
Has never felt the stress of care  
To know how friends and kindred fare?  
What will those anxious thoughts dispel  
Like the glad tidings, "All is well!"  
Strange is that missive's secret power  
To tinge with fear man's happiest hour;  
When the familiar script appears  
Foreboding joy, or, loss and tears!  
With throbbing heart and swimming eye,  
And lips that lack their rosy dye,  
He scans with eager glance the seal—  
What will its mystic page reveal?  
Thrice happy he whose message brings  
Good news on fortune's friendly wings;  
In that glad hour, his cares outgrown,  
The phantoms of suspense all flown,  
Life throbs anew through every vein;  
Faint hope revives,—exults again!

## VII

What scenes in alien lands shall cheer  
The eye, the heart, the listening ear,  
That hunger for the homelike joy  
Which cruel death and change destroy?

Vain is the search: no ray appears  
To light the sailor's coming years;  
No mother, brother, friend, no home,—  
What power shall check his aimless roam,  
Or gild with hope some coming day  
When toils and cares are passed away,—  
That dearest dream to seaworn tar,  
That cheers life's darkness like a star!  
This hope dissolved, life's dream is gone,—  
He lingers in a world alone:  
Reckless alike of weal or wo,  
No pole star lures his needle now.  
Like drifting kelp he haunts the wave,  
Unprized his life, unshunned his grave.  
Mixtures like these are they which fill  
The sailor's cup of good and ill,  
And never more deceitful scheme  
Fashioned the opium eater's dream.  
Be wise, O boy! nor deem the sea  
From misery is ever free:  
The shipman's pleasures envy not,—  
No dreamlike joy attend his lot;  
But hunger, sickness, cold and heat,  
And want, and loneliness, repeat  
Their record on life's logbook where  
Grim danger's eyes forever glare!  
Still sea-blown bubbles men pursue,  
Lured by their changing, cheating hue,  
And gain they not an airdrawn prize  
As rich as charms old Sindbad's eyes?  
Good as his best, as fair, as vain:  
A drop of joy,—a sea of pain!

## VIII

Avast! you cry! what themes are these  
For men who tempt the raging seas!  
Bold men-of-war's-men trained to dare  
The lightning on the dizzy spar!  
To clutch for life at slippery shroud  
In blackest night when, piping loud,  
The tempest roars and, rolling low,  
The yardarms pierce the tumbling snow!  
Men breathing fire and battle smoke,  
When broadsides shatter ribs of oak,—  
Who board the decks of desperate foe  
With daring leap,—give blow on blow,  
Fierce thrust of pike, and cutlass clash,  
The carbine's shot, and pistol's flash—  
The foemen yield! they strike! O hear  
The gallant victor's ringing cheer!  
O valiant tars! your early fame  
Gave lustre to a nation's name!  
Old Glory saw your valor then;  
It lives! it will exult again,  
And boom of gun and pealing bell,—  
Banners aflame and shootings tell  
The maddening joy that greets the brave,—  
Victorious on the ocean wave!

## IX

Who are these men? what language runs  
Along the curving battery's guns

As, cares dismissed, the dogwatch free  
Proclaims each day's brief jubilee!  
Have graybeards salts no storied lore  
Of perils past on savage shore;  
Adventures strange in alien lands,  
Wreckings in ice, or burning sands,  
Of capture, torture and release  
From cannibals in southern seas?  
No story of barbarian cheer,  
Of smuggler, pirate, buccaneer,—  
No hairbreadth risk that tests the brave  
On lee shore, reef, by tidal wave,  
When men like demons do and dare  
As blood and thunder tales declare?  
Few themes like these have life or power  
To sway the thought of social hour:  
In sailor life what are they all  
But trivial things which none recall,  
Or horrors caged in memory's cell  
With silence standing sentinel  
To guard for aye from eager ear  
The secret strangers may not hear.

## X

Who are these men? Not ours to know  
The secrets of their weal or wo;  
Time, change, caprice, misfortune, chance  
Have clasped their hands in witches' dance,  
Each, casting in the caldron broth  
Life's strengthening meat, or cheating froth.

Partaking all—they live—reply  
To each new task and toil—"Aye! Aye!"  
One at the Nile with Nelson knew  
A night of doom: with darkened view,  
In sulphurous smoke, his gun he aimed  
Sole where the Frenchman's cannon flamed,  
And pulled an oar, when paused the fight,  
In blazing Orient's awful light.  
And one, a veteran, cheery still,  
Outweathering battle, storm, all ill,  
Had seen the flash and heard the roar  
Of volleyed murder at Dartmoor.  
And one with Lawrence, ill-starred man,  
Saw grim misfortune's cruel ban;  
Saw fate perturb the battle's scale—  
The hero's deathcry naught avail.  
One forehead bore a jagged scar  
From thrust of pike by British tar  
In Perry's fight on Erie's wave:  
He claims no place among the brave,—  
Dim is his thought of honor won,—  
We own and name him Valor's Son!  
And one had seen war's awful wreck  
Cumber the *Frolic's* splintered deck;  
Had hauled her riddled ensign down  
And linked his name with fair renown.  
(O luckless craft! grim irony  
Mocked at thy fate in naming thee!)  
And one had thriddled pine-tree boles  
In quest of wary Seminoles  
Low crouching in the tangled grass  
In Land of Flowers—and death's morass;

He carries to his latest hour  
Souvenirs of Osceola's power.  
And one the *Princeton's* fatal gun  
Had sponged and rammed: his duty done,  
He stood aside:—a roaring blast—  
The awful tragedy was past!  
And one, a youth with sunny eye,  
Had seen the *Somer's* victims die:  
Question him not! his lips are sealed  
On secrets that he will not yield.  
By chance or fate he was a part  
Of grewsome deed that chills his heart.  
And one with Wilkes had scanned the skies,  
Seas, shores, all life that swims or flies,  
In torrid and antarctic zone  
In quest of marvels—still unknown.

## XI

Adventurous men! what kindly power  
Befriended them in peril's hour!  
Crises of life! when, side by side,  
One hero lived, one darkly died  
And passed forgotten and unknown—  
O wise ones—why the difference shown?  
And why this silence brooding o'er  
Their lives and all their hidden lore?  
And why of all the past no glance  
In ours save word let slip by chance?  
Not they the men to plague their kind  
With themes of life and death: their mind



Is closed and sealed against all claim  
Of valorous deed or noble name.  
Toil, danger, death, or what you will,  
Are common-place and duty still.  
Stories they tell, believe me, man,  
Full of strange life: the midwatch span  
Cuts short the tale, weird, racy, bold,  
As any Sindbad ever told:  
What tho' scant life-truth adds its charm?  
It's all a yarn.—Where lies the harm  
Of mingling fact with fiction's tale  
One's lonely shipmate to regale?  
So lubbers earn their windy fame,—  
May not Old Blowhard do the same?  
Our sailor boys I know right well  
Loved on young life and sports to dwell;  
They loved to picture pleasures new  
In some glad day when hopes come true.  
Braggarts will boast: true men who roam  
Joy in the scenes of youth and home.  
Remembrance charms: hope's beacons blaze  
Illuminating happy days.  
They picture early life's return  
In sober age when, voyaging done,  
They anchor in some harbor near  
Old friends, old scenes and memories dear;  
No watch on deck! no reefing sail—  
But all night in at last: all hail  
That sailor's heaven—that joy supreme  
That glorifies his lifelong dream!  
As when brave Nelson, tempest-worn  
And battle-scarred and weary grown,

Longed for a cot and garden trees  
And rest from war and stormy seas,  
Yet died mid din of battle's wreck  
And carnage on his bloody deck.  
Thou too, Sir John! Alas for thee—  
Lost sailor of the Arctic sea,  
Turning in vain thy weary eye  
Where everlasting icefields lie,  
With thoughts of England, home and one  
Who waits for thee till life is done.  
Sealed be the mysteries that attend  
Thy fading hope, thy bitter end.  
Life's lot foreseen, its end, its pain,  
What mariner would count it gain?  
Let hope light up life's sombre sky  
He hails the venture,—“Win or die!”

## XII

Our landmarks all are fading now,  
Light ripples murmur at our prow  
And lightly swelling in the breeze  
Our sails keep time with singing seas;  
Glad music at the evening hour  
Charms heart and brain with subtle power,  
Stirring the pulse with livelier beat,  
Waking to life the dancer's feet,  
Waking the cheery notes of song  
With mighty chorus, loud and strong.  
All yield to music's wondrous power,—  
All feel the witchery of the hour,—

All hearts dismiss their gloom and pain  
And revel in the present gain;  
And all exult, with spirit free,  
And catch the life of bounding sea  
And stirring song, so full of cheer  
Syrens enchanted list to hear!  
O blessed music; power divine!  
What wondrous ministry is thine,  
To cheer, to lift, to hearten man  
Maltreated by fate's cruel ban!  
Hushed is the music,—sporting done,  
The silent nightwatch is begun:  
A youthful trio grouped alone  
Dismiss the moment's lightsome tone;  
Their quiet eyes so pensive stray  
Among the hues of dying day  
It needs no quizzing to descry  
The scene that fills their musing eye;  
For when through clouds of gray and dun  
Blooms the red autumn of the sun,  
Visions appear of scenes and days  
That cheered when first we saw its rays.  
As dons the moon her pearly veil  
They listen to the nightwatch tale  
Prefaced with, "On such night as this"—  
Follows a theme of bygone bliss;  
Of sports when winter's chilly reign  
Binds stream and lake in icy chain.  
Again the skater's joy they feel:  
The mirrored lake, the glancing steel,  
The rushing file, the bonfire's shine,  
The arc, the curve, the wavy line,

The frenzied race, the icy spray,  
The victor's shout that ends the play—  
In vivid, lifelike vision, all  
Glide through fond memory's pictured hall:  
Last days and sports troop back again,  
To cheer the seaway's teeming brain!

## XIII

As thought wakes thought the kindling eye  
Greets visions new as others die.  
The rushing sleigh, by moonlight glow,  
When wear the fields their robes of snow,  
Scales the high hill and sounds the vale,  
Like seabird in a piping gale;  
The steeds like forms of frostwork seem,  
Each quick drawn breath a puff of steam!  
Match me ye realms of fairyland  
With outlook in such splendor planned,  
When earth mocks heaven with starry sheen—  
A midnight, moonlight, winter scene!  
O list,—the far-off echoes ring  
And to and fro their music fling,  
Then nearer, louder, quicker, clear,  
The jingling din thrills heart and ear,  
And hill, and rock, and wood around  
Prolong in mellowing notes the sound,  
And the crisp snow in rhythm sweet,  
Tinkles beneath the horses' feet.  
These phantom joys are passing fair  
Yet other belles make music there,

And cheeks with mirth and frolic glow,  
And eyes outshine the star-gemmed snow!  
Can eyes that gaze on tropic sky  
Sparkle in racier sports than they?  
Or nymphs of vineclad, sunny France  
Seem lovelier in their airy dance?  
Can pleasures all this earth around  
With more of manly zest be found?  
One land for me! farewell the rest!  
My own home joys, I love them best!

## XIV

Eight bells have struck: our watch is done;  
In drowsy hammock, loosely swung,  
With measured cadence, soothing, slow,  
We cleave in dreams the feathery snow!  
Mysterious power of thinking men,  
To live our long past lives again!  
To color all those splendid days  
With joys unknown in these dull ways.  
Where is the thrill of manhood's prime?  
O for keen youth with zest sublime!  
The prize that lured De Leon's quest  
And fired the aged warrior's breast;  
Slight were thy peril, toil and pain,  
Couldst thou thy early bloom regain!  
Welcome the land, by sages sung,  
Where man shall be forever young!  
Blind men are we! alas! how soon  
Fell on us sorrow's dread simoon!

The softest gales the tropics nurse  
To us convey a blighting curse,  
For gloomy death, with dragon wings,  
His sable shadow on us flings,  
And, beckoned by fate's bony hand,  
Blindly we near a deadly strand.  
Through languid mists our lookouts hail  
Manila's outlines dim and pale;  
Through brooding fogs her domes arose  
Like phantoms at the evening's close,—  
Such phantoms as might well foretell  
The sorrows that our crew befel.  
Infection steeped the evening air,  
Charged with its message of despair.  
Then gloom usurped mirth's winsome place  
And glared from many a ghostlike face;  
Then every step in nightly tread,  
Seemed but the tiptoe of the dead.  
The young in years, of stalwart limb,  
With failing breath and vision dim,  
Withered at touch of spoiler's hand,—  
The goodliest of our hardy hand:  
Such ever death's ill-fated prey,—  
The brightest things first feel decay!

## XV

Alas for those who watch and wait  
At constant Love's unclosing gate:  
Tireless they tend her beacon fire,—  
While hope remains can it expire?



Yet all in vain: the bitter tear  
Shall never greet the loved one's bier.  
Unnoted all by loving eye  
The rock-cave where his form shall lie:  
Above the spot no bloom shall flame,  
No lettered marble speak his name,  
Or mark the ocean wanderer's grave  
Beneath the Indies' hungry wave!  
Who shall deny that fear and dread  
Pillowed the sailor's sleepless head,  
As haggard night, and sickening day,  
Bore each its prize of life away,  
And thought would her grim question ply,  
Each word, a stab,—who next shall die?  
So eyes grew dim,—kind voices still:  
Mute, viewless ghosts their places fill.  
O life! O death! O mystery!  
They died, and we live on to-day!

## XVI

How helpless man in fatal hour  
Fraught with infection's deadly power!  
So silent, stealthy, sure, unseen,  
Death wins the prize—all help is vain!  
Why comes there not some sign of wo,—  
Some voice to warn of mortal foe,—  
“A deadly poison taints the gale!  
“O spread with haste the kindly sail!  
“Death's lair is here,—no longer stay!  
“All hands on deck! away! away!”

Our sails were set,—the welcome wind  
Soon pushed us from tainted land  
Where, breathing poison, stalwart men  
Turned pale—grew still! Never again,  
At midwatch muster, voice or form  
Shall claim a thought: in calm and storm  
Their place is void: in alien tides  
They sleep in death: while time abides  
Naught shall record their life's brief part  
Save memory in a shipmate's heart.  
O mournful end, to die so soon!  
Their sunbright day grew dark at noon,—  
Before the scenes of manhood's prime  
Revealed the scanty joys of time:  
When steadfast hope her promise gave  
Of every boon that wanderers crave,  
And faithful memory's beckoning hand  
Still lured them to their native land  
Whose welcome they shall never know  
While ocean's tides above them flow.  
Plowmen are we of stormy main,—  
With men we sow the furrowed plain!  
Stupendous thought!—this peopled sea—  
And the big harvest that shall be!

## XVII

Chusan's low hills, a wavy line,  
Scallop the waste of leaden brine;  
Barren and tame her slopes appear  
And scant their signs of homelike cheer.

Then came Amoy's hills of green  
And frowning cliffs with vales between,  
With clustering villas, groves in flower,  
Crowned by her grand pagoda tower  
Whose forms a priceless boon bestow;  
They bid fond memory's canvas glow  
In times when dead things live again  
And trooping come like scenic train.  
Welcome the many-pictured page  
In hopeful youth, in sober age!  
O China! tomb of ages old,  
Release thy dead hand's rigid hold  
On the dead past—unseal thine eyes,  
And feel the morning's glad surprise  
That calls thee from thy foolish dream  
Of learning, worth and power supreme,  
Above barbarians—devil-born—  
The objects of thy haughty scorn!  
Thou canst not? wilt not? still wilt spurn  
The proffered hand-grasp and return  
The boon with insult? Then for thee  
Goes forth stern nature's firm decree—  
Thy lofty pride must fall altho'  
The cannon's blast must lay it low.  
O mighty force! live millions sped,  
Impinging on the millions dead,  
And life and death—the new, the old  
In conflict joined. The tale, retold,  
The world has heard. Excuse and blame  
Have, mingling, tinged with honor—shame—  
The motives, deeds and names of men  
Whom God shall judge: they rest till then.

Not ours the task when time shall fail,  
To weigh the dead in even scale;  
Be rather ours the part to call  
For gentle mercy on us all!  
Grim musings these: the singing wave  
Tells no dark tales: the deep sea grave  
Hides the wild wreck of war and storm,—  
No skeletons her face deform!  
Exultant from the land we fly  
To cleave the tide from shore to sky!

## XVIII

Seas yet untried, the shoal, the rock,  
The sunken reef, the tempest's shock,  
And endless leagues of tumbling foam,  
As wide as heaven's encircling dome,  
The thunderbolt, the lightening's glare,  
Our noble craft shall bravely dare.  
Through endless hours of glaring light,—  
Through watches long of lagging night,—  
Asleep, awake, we hurry on—  
The shoreless verge is never won!  
So feels the heart till opening skies  
Admit again land's glad surprise.

## XIX

Land O! Japan's rough lines of blue  
Gladdened the seaboy's hungry view!  
To Jeddo's wide and welcome bay

Lead, helm, and sail, made cautious way,  
Whose waters, walled from tossing deep,  
And gusty winds, untroubled sleep.  
As silent seemed each cultured field,  
Each vale hung round with rocky shield,—  
The shaggy wood, the mountain dim,  
The line that marked the bay's wide rim.  
No smoky columns upward rolled  
To stain her sunlit hues of gold,  
But undisturbed, in dreams serene,  
Lay the vast world of blue and green.  
No busy sounds from leafy glen  
Betrayed the haunts of stirring men;  
No banner wooed the mountain air,—  
No beacon flashed its signal fire;  
Recumbent earth and kindly sky  
Dreamed in the low winds' lullaby.

## XX

But look again! the curving beach,  
Far as the straining eye can reach,  
Is flecked with groups of hurrying men  
Increasing, streaming down as when  
Danger invades the honied hive  
And forth the maddened myriads drive.  
Each frith, and cove, and sheltered bay,  
Its tribute gives of shallops gay;  
They crowd the waters' gleaming face,—  
A thousand prows its glass displace—  
Their flags a cloud of bannered bloom,—

A myriad oarblades toss their foam,—  
Chiefs gleam in gold and silk attire,  
Bright armor flashes rays of fire:  
The rush of prows, the groaning oar,  
And voices rough, in medley roar;  
Thus came, upborne by ebbing tide,  
In martial pomp, the Armada's pride.  
Who has not seen at burning noon  
The gorgeous wealth of flowery June  
Beyond the vision's utmost goal  
In billowy undulations roll?  
A dancing, laughing, floral sea,—  
Its wave caps tossing wild with glee!  
Burdening the wind with odors rare—  
Elysian fields! are they as fair?  
With famed Arcadia's sylvan pride  
The bannered fleet in splendor vied.  
What nights were ours in Yeddo bay!  
What splendors charmed our transient stay,  
When bannered glory changed at night  
To one broad belt of gleaming light!  
Whichever way our eyes were turned  
Ten thousand brilliant lanterns burned,  
And wavelets multiplied the glow  
In myriad sparkles from below,  
In varied motion when the bay  
Tossed with the gusty night-wind's play,  
Or slept serene, as round us came  
The gorgeous zone's prismatic flame!  
Ascend aloft: with wonder see  
A splendid city's jubilee!  
The gallant mast, a slender spire,



## XXI

Encircled by a ring of fire!  
The Sunrise Kingdom's navy now  
Surrounds our ship, lashed stern to prow,  
A cordon strong; alas! how frail  
To test our broadsides iron hail!  
Quaint and uncouth their rig and build,  
With armed and mail-clad warriors filled;  
Staunch in the sea storm's wildest beat,  
In battle strong, with kindred fleet;  
Safe as a guard of fisher's home  
When hostile junks in challenge come,  
Or pirate proas deftly wait  
By narrow pass, or crooked strait.  
Snug in old ocean's clinging zone  
The Island Empire lies, alone,  
Shielded from stranger's artful plea—  
The Hermit Nation of the sea!  
No foreign broils invade their isle,  
They heed not threat or specious smile;  
Within their affluent home secure  
They bid each stranger leave their door.  
Our proffered hand they calmly spurned,  
To every plea a deaf ear turned.  
Their wish was given by sworded chief  
At once decisive, curt and brief.  
“We long have known your nation's name,  
“In commerce great, renowned in fame:  
“Long be they so: refit your store,  
“Unfurl your sail: return no more!”

## XXII

Then wood in lavish piles they bring,  
With crystal water from the spring;  
Our ship they filled! From cultured fields  
Came every boon their climate yields.  
Free was the gift,—no venal trade  
Could pass their jealous barricade.  
From alien gifts and traffic gain,  
They turn as from a deadly bane,  
Resolved to keep, while yet they may,  
The robber nations still at bay.  
We spread our sails on stay and yard  
To seaward sail,—the wakeful guard,  
In boats by thousands, pennoned gay,  
With hawsers towed us down the bay,  
Eager to hasten from their shore  
Men feared, suspected, evermore!  
If scant the welcome they expressed,  
They surely sped the parting guest!  
A fair wind from the landward side  
In wavelets stirred the ebbing tide,  
Filled our broad sails and grandly now  
Crowds oceanward our rushing prow.  
Each tossing boat, when rose the gale,  
Shipped oars and spread a snowy sail;  
As seagulls slide along the blue,  
Japan's flotilla homeward flew.

## XXIII

The island peaks sink slowly down  
In waves that all its splendor drown,

As Fujisan's white, sunlit cone  
Glow, pale and dies. We are alone!  
Ahead, around, one trackless main  
Outspreads, a never ending plain,  
All landmarks gone,—yet on we fly  
Like homing pigeon through the sky.  
What though the wind, the sky, the wave,  
Dealt kindly with the seaworn brave,  
Manila's blight still darkly hung  
On mind and heart, on old and young.  
In folded bud the hidden worm  
Eats on and blasts a lovely form.  
So did disease in secret prey  
On manliest forms that, day by day,  
Grew pale, and thin, and slow of breath,—  
The heralds sure of coming death.  
Within the sick-bay's narrow space,  
Where swinging hammocks interlace,  
And crowded cots their burdens bear  
Of lingering pain and dull despair,  
The pallid forms, the mortal strife,  
Befit the sailor's unblest life.  
From whitewashed deckbeam, swinging low,  
The dim lamp vibrates to and fro;  
The humid air in halo plays  
Around the dull and struggling rays,  
And spectral shadows rise and fall  
Like ghostly shapes along the wall,—  
Timing their motions, quaint and droll,  
To the huge warship's measured roll.  
At every plunge of surging bow  
Beneath the billow's crest of snow,

The battened ports their trust betray  
And gush with streams of chilling spray.  
The gathering waters, gurgling near  
On sloshy decks, annoy the ear;  
While sobbing scuppers, timber's groan  
And creaking foremast, seaman's moan,  
And wan discomfort, lingering pain,  
Fret tortured nerve and throbbing brain—  
With anguish fill the reeking den,—  
A dismal berth for dying men.  
Submerged within this doleful cell  
Men worn with wasting sickness dwell,  
Through painful nights, through weary days,—  
Forbid the sunshine's genial rays,  
Home comforts all and woman's care  
In nature's crisis unknown there!  
In that dim cavern's narrow bounds,  
And odors vile, and sickening sounds,  
Since cleft our keel the Narrow's tide  
Three-score brave mariners have died!  
O thou adventurous boy! beware!  
Home's peace and plenty, love and care  
Leave not for miseries that attend  
The homeless sailor's hapless end.  
Chose calling, place, and comrades, all,  
Mindful of perils that befall  
This mortal life. Shun folly's snare:—  
Shall sudden death surprise you there?  
Try by this test your choice supreme,  
And let life's end inspire life's dream!

## THE PACIFIC

### I

For twenty days no fairer gale  
Filled ever galley's silken sail,  
Then clouds, ill omened, grew and spread  
On either bow, abeam, ahead ;  
With wings of wind the storm came on,  
And denser veiled the hidden sun ;  
The sea forgot its limpid blue,  
And changed its depths to inky hue,  
While capping waves and rising foam  
Herald the mighty ocean storm !  
The strong north wind a burden bore  
Of fog from far Aleutian shore  
That wrapped us in its gloomy cloud,—  
Dripped on our deck from spar and shroud,—  
Clenched every form in giant hold,  
And numbed our limbs with damp and cold.  
Through weary days and nights of pain  
Trailed our white wake the shoreless plain :—  
How vast this reach of wasteful sea !  
How far away our homes must be !  
How baffled is the weary eye  
Watching in vain the land to spy !  
Sublime thy faith, O sailor brave,  
Who tempted first the shoreless wave !

## II

At last the far horizon's line  
Was fretted by a welcome sign—  
Hawaii's peaky isles that grew  
In noble outline on the blue.  
O happy isles! whose breezes bring  
The odors of an endless spring,  
With royal bounty ever nigh,  
For famished seaman's full supply;  
Faith, shouting, greets Elysium's Sign  
In the vast world of rolling brine!  
O seagirt world where nature's hand  
Her wonderous work in grandeur planned!  
Inspiring happy guests to sing  
Of isle adorned with coral ring,  
Of mountain's dome and rocky spire  
Illumined by volcanic fire,  
Where streams of molten lava flow,  
Where sooty Vulcan's forges glow,  
And low within the hollow ground  
Is heard his anvil's booming sound!  
Unfailing, through the full orb'd year,  
The pendant fruit and flowers appear;  
Luxuriant vines and waving corn  
The sloping hills and vales adorn;  
The orange gleams like ball of gold,  
The luscious melon, huge in mold,  
Banana clusters curving down  
With rank on rank of fragrant brown,  
And many a dainty thing to cloy



The craving taste of sailor boy.  
O blessed islands! memory clings  
To by-gone scenes and grateful sings  
Of happy days when, faint, forlorn  
With wasting sickness, hunger born,  
At last our anchor, joy to tell!  
On Honolulu's corals fell!  
Vanished our hunger! vanished fear!  
We felt the power of Oahu cheer!

## III

Hail happy islands! not the same  
As when at first the white face came,  
And saw thy wo. To-day we view  
An island world created new!  
Behold a sign, my sceptic friend,—  
A marvel! O ye wise! attend:—  
A teacher with the book of God  
Passed to and fro: where'er he trod  
Sprang trees of life! they grew, they spread  
And filled the land with fruit and shade,—  
Abundant, heaven's all healing tree!  
A feast for all! God's gift is free!  
Men eat and live and bless the day  
That saw their darkness flee away,—  
Saw faith divine her temples rear,  
Saw learning's radiant form appear,  
Saw in the midst of oceans, wild  
Thy wondrous birth, O happy child!

## IV

In fearless haste we sought the strand—  
With welcome words, with open hand,  
And hearty cheer and full supplies  
They blessed our eager, hungry eyes.  
No warriors yelled their fierce alarms,  
Appeared no bands with jealous arms,  
No naked limbs with warpaint foul,  
No visage marred by murder's scowl,  
The swarming tribes with hand and voice  
Beckoned and cried,—Welcome! Rejoice!  
All round our world the gospel plan  
Reveals the brotherhood of man;—  
All peoples, touched by love divine,  
In unity of heart combine!

## V

Since spear and warclub held their sway  
Their power supreme, brief is the day,  
Then night unveiled her terrors grim,  
When waned the moon in vapor dim,  
As round the feastfire's lurid flame  
In crowds the hideous dancers came,  
In trappings clad which best array  
The guests of savage revelry!  
The dance begins:—stained faces bear  
Such looks as fiends in conflict wear,—

The heritage of ages gone  
Of blood and crime, from sire to son.  
Their limbs, with paint and shells arrayed,  
Gleam hideous in the light and shade  
That play around the flaring pyre,  
Gilding each front with hues of fire.  
Above them rolls the stygian smoke;  
Well were it could that gloomy cloak  
Hide from the sight of heavenly eye  
Rites which we mortals quail to spy!

## VI

All now is changed; from mountain side  
Where warriors yelled, and fought, and died,  
With happy songs glad troops repair  
To zion's fane—the house of prayer.  
A power divine alone could win  
From death to life, these island men!  
All hail the heroes, true and brave,  
Who ventured all, the lost to save!  
The gentle wives who dared to stand,  
Faithful till death, with voice and hand,  
Through the dark night till morning's prime  
Rewarded well their faith sublime!  
Listen, O earth! What gold or gem  
Of thine shall form the diadem  
Their brows shall wear? God's hand alone  
Robes, crowns, and seats them near the throne!

## VII

The island's fruits, the genial air,  
New life restored and banished care;  
In cheeks where fever's hectic burned  
The ruddy rose's bloom returned,  
And sport, and song, with wonted power,  
Gladdened again the sunset hour;  
Mirth walked again her sprightly round  
Exultant from the quick rebound.  
O man,—what vigor in thee lies—  
Crushed oft so low, so soon to rise!  
Free to the winds our sails were flung,  
The sea breeze through our cordage sung,  
As eastward trailed our foaming seam  
Across Pacific's glow and gleam!  
A peerless sea! so darkly blue,  
And wreathed with foam its glowing hue,  
The cloud-flecked sheen of deepest skies  
Are rivalled in its gorgeous dyes.  
There sleeping thunders calmly dream  
Or, wakened by the lightening's stream,  
Fill boundless space with crash and boom  
As if had come the day of doom.  
Heaven's warfare past, at daylight's close  
The weary billows seek repose;  
From crested waves a blending sound  
Rolls all the realm of waters round,—  
Millions of voices, low and strong  
That sing their everlasting song.

Beneath our gently plunging bow  
Rise and roll forward waves of snow,—  
And see! the crests of foamy brine  
Are all aflame! the bubbles shine  
With flash and gleam; the mystic light  
Makes witchwork for the drowsy sight!  
Ho! knighthood look out! look below!  
Sleep if thou canst when ocean's glow  
Bids thee awake, behold, admire  
The web of waters shot with fire!

## VIII

Pacific sea!—where calms prevail,  
When shipmen vainly spread their sail;  
When hushed is every wavelet's lay,  
And all its music dies away.  
Yet sleeping air, and drowsy sea,  
Yield many an hour of frisky glee  
To mollusk, fish, and seabird brave  
That loves its home, the lonely wave.  
Then sportive whales in fearless play  
Spout skyward jets of showery spray,  
Rear their huge flukes, go darkly down  
In plash, and whirl, and boiling foam!  
The tumbling porpoise, black as night,  
Shines with the sun's reflected light,—  
A merry school, in groups they go—  
Like leapfrog boys where daisies grow.  
The shark in treacherous ambush lies,  
Fair as the seaweed's greenest dyes;

The spotty dolphin joins the play,  
And gleams like northern, midnight ray;  
The sea gull folds her wing to rest,  
A bubble on the water's breast;  
The stormy petrel feels the spell,  
Soft cradled on the glassy swell;  
The nautilus, a sailor brave,  
In pearly shallop gems the wave;  
Of shining gauze his tiny sail,—  
The zephyr light his welcome gale,—  
Frail as a fleck of ocean foam,  
Exulting in his floating home.  
Still lies the sea, still is the blast,  
Idly the canvas flaps the mast;  
The scuppers sob with gurgling sound,  
Hot sunbeams steeping all around,  
While listless loungers chide the breeze  
That fails to stir the lazy seas,  
And yawn the lagging hours away  
Rebelling at the long delay.  
O huge old hulk! thy helpless roll  
Proclaims thee dead: no living soul  
Gives vital motion to thy form  
As when fair breeze or driving storm  
Pours on thy sails the breath of life  
And stirs thee to thy gallant strife.  
O for some art to fill thy frame  
With power evolved from hottest flame  
And make thee live and force thy way  
O'er glassy ocean plains nor stay  
Thy stedfast course when wind and tide  
And waves confront thee—all allied!



That time shall come! the happy hour  
Speeds to exalt Old Glory's power!  
And thou too hail! Pacific Sea!  
The Age of Steam thy crown shall be!

## IX

Breeze O! light scuds climb up the sky  
The dog-vane stirs! relief is nigh!  
The water's verge, a trembling line,  
No longer yields its brassy shine,—  
The sea's hot glare is changing too  
And all with whitening foam aglow.  
Afar and near the glittering plain  
Sings welcome to the wind again.  
The ship revives.—salutes the gale,  
Curves high and low each puffing sail  
Then fills away her yards atrim,—  
Proud sea-bird on the water's brim!  
New life returned the seamen feel  
With the first heave of rising keel;  
They sniff with zest the freshening air,—  
Runs round the deck a straggling cheer,—  
Hilarious shouts and cries as when  
Schoolboys emerge from irksome den.  
Fresh blew the wind: we crowded sail,  
Astern we left a snowy trail;  
Ahead a routed army flew  
Wave chasing wave: the tumult grew  
As our huge bows now rose, now fell  
With roaring plunge: the winds impel  
Our looming hulk on ranks of waves  
That bore us on like crouching slaves.

Grave tars with solemn air avow  
"The girls are at the tow-rope now!"  
With masking laugh we all conceal  
What tell-tale eye-flash might reveal.

## X

Still on, and on, by day, by night,  
In moonlight pale, by glaring light,  
By gentle breeze, by rushing storm,  
By drifting current, onward borne;  
Through dashing rain, through drenching  
    spray,  
Through fogs and mists for many a day,  
Till leagues on leagues of wasteful sea  
Lie leagues on leagues in space away,  
And regions limitless, sublime,  
More like eternity than time,  
Incessantly the weary brain  
Oppress with a mysterious pain.  
O lonesome waste of seas and skies!  
A million waves each moment rise,  
A million die: a million more  
Prolong the everlasting roar,  
While we through shoreless space are hurled,  
Caged prisoners in a circling world!  
Changeless and blank the area lies,  
Encircled by the bending skies!  
Yet on, and on; no rest, no sleep,  
To bark that dares the pulsing deep;  
No moment when the floods are still,  
No respite for the weary keel;

On, till Antarctic skies unfold  
The southern cross in starry gold,  
And many a constellation's blaze  
Forever hid from northern gaze!

## XI

What land is this that greets the eye,—  
A speck between the sea and sky,  
Astray and lost, and yet well known,  
Though in the waste of waves alone?  
What manly heart beats not to hear  
That name to boyhood's memory dear?  
Land of poor Selkirk's long exile—  
Juan Fernandez! witching isle!  
Romantic gem! each wood and dell  
Mourn the departed Crusoe still!  
Low sank the isle—in joyful view  
Rose Andes' peaks in palest blue;  
Nearer approached the welcome land,  
We scanned the hills, the vales, the strand,—  
The city grew, the mole, the fleet,  
The thronging boats, the busy street,—  
Our anchor dropped. At rest we lay  
In Valparaiso's crescent bay.

## XII

The barren hills curve sharply down  
In outline rough of sombre brown,  
With many a shelf and terrace wild  
With dwellings quaint and villas piled.

## 82      Afloat With Old Glory

Adown the hills the deep ravine,  
With trickling rill and spots of green,  
Small solace give to searching eye  
Where earthquake's spoils disordered lie.  
Dropped loosely on the shattered hills,  
Each niche some toppling building fills;  
Up frowning steeps the roadways rise,—  
The zigzag lines a strange surprise;  
They boldly fret the dizzy edge  
Of precipice whose beetling ledge  
Threatens the deep and narrow glen,  
Huddled with pigmy homes of men.  
Anon some quiet garden's green,  
With shade, and bloom, and fountain's sheen,  
Allures the feet from dusty way  
Along the luscious walks to stray.  
When evening lights her welcome star  
Lithe fingers trill the soft guitar;  
Enlivened by the sprightly sound  
Fandango twirls her mazy round,  
While speaking eye and mirthful hour  
Confess gay music's witching power.

### XIII

Amid these hills, these rugged vales,  
The Chilian maid unthinking dwells;  
Her mind to inspiration's page  
A dreary blank; in youth and age,  
Ave Marias her only boast—  
And Pater Nosters,—beaded, crossed;

Faithful to keep each holiday,  
And every rule of priestly sway,  
As sunset hues in night retire,  
As sunrise tips the waves with fire,  
O what a race to feel the might  
Of sacred learning's kindling light!  
And O what hearts to know the sway  
Of pure religion's ecstasy!  
O God! when will the man of sin  
No more enslave the souls of men!

## XIV

Along the harbor's sloping beach  
Lie spacious street and sandy reach,  
With scattered trees, level and wide  
For airy drive or ambling ride;  
While plazas, churches, markets, mole,  
Reward the stranger's curious stroll.  
A high plateau above the town  
On city spires and domes looks down,  
On busy street, on stirring quay,  
On shipyard strewn with beam and knee,  
On merchant ships that cluster nigh,  
On warships grim that anchored lie,  
And on the wide bay's liquid floor  
Once vibrant with fierce battle's roar!  
No equal force, no chivalry,  
Met worthy foe in even fray;  
Two ships, two guns, two men for one!  
The decks were cleared,—the fight was on!

Flamed the red broadsides! shock and roar  
Of shot and bursting shell that tore  
Stout ribs of oak and mast and spar,  
And form of many a gallant tar!  
Five times the half hour's sand had run  
When ceased to answer gun for gun!  
Brave men, one hundred fifty-four,  
Maimed, drowned and killed, fight nevermore.  
The noble ship was wrapped in flame,  
The end had come: war's fatal game  
Had passed all hope of happy turn,  
And Porter left the wreck—to burn.  
The smoke blew off: the din was still,—  
Thousands looked down from beetling hill,—  
In ruin, flood and firey spray  
A shattered hulk the *Essex* lay.  
As oft the sailor scans the bight  
That smoked and boomed in that sea fight  
With loyal pride he tells the tale  
To boys, whose plaudits never fail,  
Exulting in the hero's boast,—  
“Our ship alone,—no honor's lost!”

## XV

Our pent-up crew, from sea watch free,  
Vexed the dull town with noisy glee;  
For Valparaiso's rugged arms  
Gave welcome from the sea's alarms.  
Yet tenfold dangers lurking there,—  
Bold brazen vice and subtle snare,



Combine to leave the reckless tar  
A victim marked with wound and scar.  
At every turn the lure is spread,—  
In folly's path his feet are led;  
The best resolves of virtue fly,  
And days and nights go madly by  
In dance and song and frantic glee,  
And bacchanalian revelry.  
Thy cursed power who can reveal,  
O maddening cup, to blast man's weal?  
The damning arts, O who can tell,  
Of her whose steps take hold on hell?  
God save thee, sailor, in the hour  
Of sin's supreme, seductive power!  
God bless thee if thy steadfast will  
Is loyal to thy conscience still!  
And such men live, and lures defy,—  
Unchanged themselves, though changed their  
sky.

## XVI

Again resounds the Boatswain's call  
In dolorous tones,—“ Up anchor all! ”  
From sheltering port again we flee—  
Restless sea-rovers all are we!  
Glad to set sail,—more glad at last,  
When, many a weary night-watch passed,  
On yard and boom our sails we stow  
In thy broad basin, Callao!  
Here greet us many an ancient scar  
Of nature's elemental war;

For quaking earth, and tidal wave,  
Hurl the proud ship, no skill can save,  
And city spire, and fortress wall,  
In mingled crush and ruin all.  
Here dead to every sunny smile  
Lies San Lorenzo's barren isle,  
A gloomy mass whose rusty mound,  
And sandy tracts of herbless ground,  
With sudden rush was upward driven,—  
From ocean's bed by earthquake riven!  
Where now the harbor's ripples rise,  
A city drowned and ruined lies,—  
Where traders haggled, bought and sold,  
The clinging seaweed's sprays unfold,  
And stirring men have yielded place  
To crawling forms and finny race.  
Yet where the land and waters meet  
Was paved again the noisy street;  
Despite the elemental foes,  
The city's piles again uprose;  
Hushed are the earth's disturbing cries,  
And peaceful nature charms the eyes.  
Deceitful trust! The day of doom  
Makes haste to fill a waiting tomb!

## XVII

A storied land lures ear and eye  
With time's old relics ever nigh;  
For every terrace, slope and vale  
Recalls to life a martial tale.  
Yon plain in nature's mantle gay

Has borne the shock of deadly fray;  
There squadrons met in mortal strife,  
And death made sport of human life,  
Those verdant shrubs that deck the plain  
From human dust their color gain;  
Their rootlets clasp the porous bone  
Of wrenched and broken skeleton.  
O bitter thought that living men,  
With hearts like ours to love, as when  
Dear kindred said a last good-bye,  
Should meet on battle field to die!  
No hand to staunch the gushing wound,  
No syllable of pardon's sound,  
No grave: alas, by vultures torn!  
Unwept, unnoticed and unknown!  
Within the mountain's deeper gloom  
Fierce robber bands maintain their home;  
Securely fenced in rocky hold,  
They raid the highways, mad for gold.  
The stranger's pace is quickened here  
From leisure tread to flying fear,  
Well may he haste! the masking shade  
Serves mountaineers for ambuscade.  
Sharp is the steel and swift the hand  
To reinforce their stern demand.

## XVIII

Note the blue hills whose summits rise  
To mingle with the hazy skies,  
And lower view that terrace fair  
As ever felt the mountain air!

The quiet hum of social cheer  
Floats downward from the broad parterre  
Of Lima's squares and plazas fair  
The mountain home! A city rare!  
The domes and towers of gleaming white,  
With spire and cross of living light,  
To God by consecration given  
Speak of the Christian's holy heaven,—  
Alas! not found where papal rule  
With superstition snares the soul.  
The old defences, moat and wall  
Clasp convent, church and hospital,—  
Cathedral vast, and prison grim,  
And many a cell with darkness dim,—  
The haunt of monk, or nun, saint,  
With cowl attired, or vesture quaint,  
And store of relics, silver, gold,  
And gems and vestures manifold.

## XIX

Wide streets the gladdened eye allure,  
Their centre coursed by brooklet pure  
Drawn from the Rimack's ample tide  
In bouldered groove to fret and glide,  
Diffusing sense of coolness round,  
And water's song with city's sound.  
The sober piles devoid of cheer,  
Grim prison houses all appear,—  
A blank expanse of dingy wall,  
With loopholes pierced, and window small,  
And gateway low, like sallyport

Of castle old, or sullen fort.  
But pass within! how changed the scene!  
What miracles of bloom and green?  
And spouting water, birds that sing  
Around the ever raining spring!  
The smooth paved court, the shadows deep,  
The galleries cool that round it sweep  
The latticed windows, airy doors,  
The columns crowned with vines and flowers;  
The drooping hammock's dreamy sway—  
Like oriole on pendant spray;  
The merry shout of boys and girls,—  
Glimpses of ebon eyes and curls,  
Fill every sense with pleased surprise  
And make us doubt our gazing eyes.  
Through open doors we wander on,  
Past lounging cit, and smoking don,  
Enter a cool and quiet hall  
With frescoed ceiling, pictured wall,  
Where marches, charges, sieges wild,  
And battle smoke, in mountains piled,  
Repeat the tale of wo and sin—  
The endless tale of martial din.  
That blissful day, O where, and when!  
That calms the ire of warlike men!  
Bids all enjoy, secure from ill,  
Heaven's precious boon, peace and good-will!

## XX

Along the vale where willows lean,  
In San Lazaro's vistas green,—

Fretting the city's outer verge,  
The Rimack's floods in tumult urge  
Through rocky bed their boiling way,  
Wetting their bushy banks with spray.  
Of massive stone, six arches wide  
Span the vexed river's foaming tide  
Whose parapets our tars explore,—  
For, says the sailor's dog-watch lore,  
The highest arch its fame has won  
From deed of daring, bravely done,  
By one whose nerve could fate disarm,—  
Courage alone his potent charm.

## XXI

A robber bold, the legend runs,  
One of capricious fortune's sons,—  
Had long maintained a madcap life,  
Scathless in many a mortal strife,  
Eluding every trap and snare,  
And art, to catch him unaware,  
Until, to desperation driven,  
His victims to the guard had given  
A proffer grand for capture bold,—  
His head's whole weight in solid gold!  
All were astir! the magic prize  
Unsealed the vigilante's eyes:  
Never before had street and wall  
Of Lima fair more strict patrol.  
But what avail guard, gate, or bar,



To him whose element is war?  
Whose life from peril draws its charm—  
Whose hardihood could death disarm!

## XXII

'Twas night: in Lima's peopled square  
Bazars were open, lights aglare;  
An ambling horseman pricked along  
The roadway through the careless throng,  
To where a window, golden framed,  
With brilliant burners flashed and flamed,  
Revealing gems and gold whose gleam  
Might shame an Eastern wizard's dream,  
So rich the show of diamonds rare,  
And stones that flashed like molten star!  
The stranger paused,—with calmest mien,—  
Scanned at a glance the splendid scene;  
On face and form the clear light shone  
As touched his feet the flagging stone.  
Like one at home, with ease and grace,  
He passed the doorway's ample space,  
The inmates with salute addressed,—  
With hand deliberate,—self-possessed,—  
He swept within his poncho's fold  
Rubies, and gems, and pearls, and gold,  
Turned on his heel and lightly sprang  
On waiting steed. A shot! a clang  
Of voices rent the evening air!  
Don Martin! O the wild despair  
That paralyzed the affrighted crew,

As through the square his courser flew!  
With terror fired, afar and nigh,  
Fierce shouts for vigilantes cry!  
Nor cry in vain: a cavalcade  
With clanging hoof and ringing blade  
Dash through the plaza's empty space  
Spurring their steeds to frantic race!

## XXIII

The gates were closed: one way alone,  
Across the Rimack's bridge of stone,  
To the mad chief an exit gave!  
His stake is—life, or felon's grave!  
He gained the bridge: upon his rear  
The horsemen closed with maddening cheer!  
He raised his cap with taunting sign  
Then forward glanced: he saw a line  
Full four ranks deep, and firmly set,  
The moon reveals each bayonet  
By guardsmen held who closely kneel  
And bear the bristling hedge of steel!  
Beyond, a squad their deadly aim  
Converges on the royal game  
Waiting the fatal order—fire!  
O robber chief! what visions dire  
Repressed thy hard, convulsive breath  
As met thine eyes that threat of death?  
Where now thy late temerity  
In this thy soul's extremity?  
With nervous hand his rein he drew,—

His steed back on his haunches threw,—  
Wheeled half around: an instant more  
Had steel and bullet pierced him there?  
He plunged the spur! a snort! a spring!  
Swift as the frightened bird takes wing  
The bridge's parapet he cleared,  
And in the darkness disappeared!  
All held their breath,—a heavy splash,—  
The spray that caught the moonbeam's flash,  
Alone assured the baffled crowd  
That Martin's form was flesh and blood.  
Yet flesh he was,—a hero still,  
Or robber bold,—or what you will,  
Who flourished on for many a year,  
His name a synonym of fear  
To vigilante, merchant, don,  
And every sober citizen,  
Who doubted not that Satan's power  
Had saved his child in peril's hour.

## XXIV

The vast cathedral's open gate  
Allures our not unwilling feet  
O'er threshold broad of massive stone,  
By fretting footsteps deeply worn.  
In niches dark, by taper's glow,  
Weird sculptures scan the scene below,—  
Martyrs and saints in pomp arrayed,  
Who unto death their Lord obeyed;  
The virgin mild, in tinsel dress,

Lulls her blest babe with fond caress ;  
The crucifixion scene abounds,  
With crown of thorns and bleeding wounds ;  
And here the solemn altar stands  
Inviting sinners' suppliant hands  
To pause, nor from the place to turn  
Where mercy's lamps unceasing burn.  
Here swells the organ's pealing sound ;  
With solemn mass its strains abound ;  
Through nave and arch its echoes roll  
Thrilling with awe the trembling soul.  
Demure the black robed priest appears,  
Oppressed with weight of gouty years ;  
The stranger's mien he scans with care,  
Pleased with his reverential air—  
Before the Saviour's shrine to see  
The drooping head, the bending knee.  
" O for that sign for Him who died  
A blessing on thy youthful head."  
And more it seemed his heart would say  
As passed we from the place away.

## XXV

How grand this plaza's gorgeous sight !  
A living fount of dancing light !  
Where foam, and jet, and pearly spray,  
With wind and sunbeam coyly play,  
Flooding the fountain's brazen rim,  
And singing its melodious hymn.  
O living water ! Beauty rare !

What earth-born things with thee compare?  
Thy lavish flow of light and song  
Streams the uncounted hours along!  
In sober midnight's drowsy time,  
In stiller noontide's sultry prime,  
In moonlight, sunlight, starlight wan,  
Thy tuneful torrent murmurs on.  
Each moment every gazing eye  
New forms of brilliancy can spy,  
In shifting color, shade and gleam—  
Of Lima's gem—the plaza dream!  
In memory's hall, where'er I stray,  
I bear thy shapes, thy sounds away;  
In musing hour, at fancy's will,  
I hear thy waters singing still!

## XXVI

Our time has passed: each golden hour  
Has taxed of eye and brain the power:  
From the rich boon of brief sojourn  
Seaward our lingering steps we turn  
Rich with the spoils of gathered store  
Culled from a land we see no more.  
In dusty cloud at furious pace  
We pass the gateway's ample space  
Through which, in gala day of old,  
The pride and pomp of war has rolled,—  
The cavalcade, the festive train,  
As victors held their transient reign.  
Gone are their splendors all to-day;

Time has consigned them to decay  
And written on each crumbling wall  
Assurance of their speedy fall.  
The old is past! the new we sing—  
All hail—the glory it shall bring!  
Our dusty tars again bestow  
A curious glance on Callao;  
The quiet harbor's surfy rim,  
The castle huge with cannon grim,  
The long low mole, the sombre fort,  
With glacis, bastion, scarp and moat,  
And belted guard on zigzag wall,—  
Peru's proud bunting crowning all;  
A picture fair on memory's page,  
The wanderer's priceless heritage.



## THE BLOCKADE

### I

Again Old Neptune's breath we feel;  
Again we tread the rolling keel;  
Again the blue sky's lofty dome  
A bubble swells above the foam.  
Homeward no longer heads our prow;  
Grim war exacts our service now.  
For the far coastline's long blockade,  
With fleet or fort for cannonade,  
For skirmish sharp, or irksome guard,  
On flood or field we go prepared;  
Along the vast Pacific's goal  
Our guns maintain war's dull patrol.  
Each homesick boy, with saddened eye,  
Saw the wild waters sternward fly,—  
Vast seas between us and the land  
Where hope's bright visions all expand,  
And all that stretch of shoreless plain  
Our plodding keel must cleave again!  
But older salts, with shrug and roll,  
And ready words, our hearts console:  
"More days, more dollars!" life and time,  
O what are they to manhood's prime!  
The golden years are idly weighed  
With folly's joys that flash and fade!

## II

As cleaves our keel the whitened brine  
To cut again the equator's line,  
Above, below, our decks abound  
With war's stern drill and battle's sound.  
The stormy drums to quarters beat,  
Mingled with notes of hurrying feet  
And boys and veterans know right well  
The sound of battle's signal call.  
The stirring drumbeat wakes no fear,—  
No timid heart is beating here;  
The palpitating notes inspire  
A thirst for conflict, blood, and fire!  
A frenzied recklessness of life,—  
A hunger for the maddening strife  
Where desperation's deeds are done,—  
Yard chafing yard, gun answering gun!  
As when the well-trained athlete knows  
The strength and skill that in him grows,  
A grappling foe he burns to grasp,  
And try his mettle in the clasp.

## III

The tackles manned, impetuous now  
Spring to the task the stalwart crew!  
As light the ponderous cannons roll  
As creatures moved by self-control;  
The oaken ribs the impact feel,—

Quivers the ship from truck to keel,  
 Careening with the mighty lunge  
 Of the vast broadside's leeward plunge.  
 Loud beat the drums! "Boarders away!"  
 And hotter grows the wild affray.  
 As hornets rush to guard their nest  
 When by assailants rudely pressed,  
 From hatchways rush the desperate band,  
 Who wage the conflict hand to hand,  
 For mortal combat well prepared,—  
 The pistoled belt, the cutlass bared,  
 Resolved to win, no thought to fly,  
 Proud of the task to do or die.  
 "On larboard bow, boarders repel!"  
 "Forward marines!" with sudden yell,—  
 With bayonet and flashing gun,  
 To danger's point the heroes run;  
 Along the bulwark form a wall  
 On which the fated foe must fall:  
 Pikemen their bristling steel combine  
 To reinforce the serried line.  
 O what a bed for foes to feel!  
 To leap on ranks of piercing steel!  
 To headlong leap on certain death  
 And strokeless, powerless, yield their breath!

## IV

The ship's bell rings! "Fire! Fire!" it cries!  
 From each gun's crew a man replies;  
 With engine, hose and buckets manned,

## 100      Afloat With Old Glory

At danger's point they take their stand.  
The force pumps quake, the waters fly  
On sail and shroud in torrents high,  
Bedashing all, with drenching stream,  
That might allure the fire's red gleam.  
The drumbeat sounds the loud recall,—  
Back to their quarters hurry all:  
The fancied fight is fought and won!  
“Clear up the decks!” “Secure your guns!”  
The order given—a strife is sure  
Who first shall answer,—“All secure!”

### V

The decks are cleared, with scant good-will  
We take the task of irksome drill  
With carbine armed, and bayonet,  
Whereat old seadogs growl and fret;  
For never yet did sailor true  
Humiliate his navy blue  
By learning aught of soldier's art  
With peace of mind and willing heart.  
Each belt with heavy pistols hung  
And burnished cutlass, loosely swung,  
Give the rough tars the wild array  
Of buccaneers of olden day.  
The manual's drill the sergeant cries;  
With flash confused the steel replies,  
As, shifting in the pliant hand,  
Its glint responds the curt command.  
A target hung at foreyard arm,

And swinging slow, meets little harm;  
The spot a foe might most desire  
Is where is aimed the hottest fire!

## VI

As fly our early days along,  
We know not how till all are gone,  
So watch and watch successive flew,  
As plowed our ship her field of blue,  
Till fifty times the sun's decline  
Had burned the western wave's skyline.  
One morning watch the lookout gazed  
Alert where sunrise glories blazed,  
When, lo! along the edge of day  
Loomed the low hills of Monterey,  
Bright with the springtime's greenest stain,  
Of sea-dews born and April rain.  
No headlands rough, no outline rude,  
Impairs the dreamy solitude,  
But gentle slope, and wavy line,  
With wood, and vale, and sky combine,  
And all the outlook beautify  
To charm the sailor's sea-worn eye.  
Our sails were furled, our anchor fell  
In the wide roadstead's heavy swell.  
No circling harbor's rocky mole  
Repels the vast Pacific's roll  
Along the wide bay's wavy trend  
Where sea and land for aye contend,—  
Booming a ceaseless, rumbling song,—

Now lulling soft, now waxing strong—  
The solemn moan of vexing sea  
Which knows no rest, by God's decree;  
Emblem of trouble, untamed ire,  
It tosses kelp, and dirt, and mire!

## VII

The hamlet thin whose huts of clay  
Straggle along the dusty way,  
Barren of thrift, of homelike cheer,  
Old legends of the past appear;  
The dull result of Padre's sway  
With proselytes of olden day.  
O woeful work! A menial prize,—  
Pagans veneered with Christian guise,—  
To guard the herd, to dig the field,  
Wood, water, bring: obedience yield  
To pampered monks, through penance pain,  
Feared, threatened, felt,—till constant gain  
Piled high their riches, tempting power  
To plunder all. The evil hour,  
Long waiting, came: with ruthless hand  
Was stripped and peeled the fruitful land.  
Of wealth despoiled, their glory waned  
And ghostly rites alone remained.  
Gone is that age, its spirit gone;  
Set is the medieval sun!  
Its martyrs sleep in mound and grave  
Where vine and fruit tree twist and wave;  
Best relics of the seed they sowed,—



Best records of their last abode.  
The land is waking from her dream  
Her long inertness to redeem:  
The friar's rule has passed away,—  
The signs are all of breaking day!

## VIII

Fremont is here: his mountain men  
Have burst their barrier, strong as when  
The avalanche rolls down the vale:  
In vain the forces that assail  
The primal heroes, prompt and brave  
To raise upon the western wave  
The glory of the eastern shore  
Uniting both forever more!  
Signs of the warfare still we meet;  
The sentry on his measured beat,  
The tents that gleam in snowy line,  
The polished cannon's brassy shine,  
The tethered steed, the campfire's cheer,  
Stacked arms and drums and bugles near,  
With bunting rippling over all  
A busy, martial camp reveal.  
Beneath the forest's cooling shade  
The riflemen are on parade;  
Brisk is the music's stirring peal,  
Precise the squadron's shapely wheel  
As shifting line, and rank, and square,  
Display the forms of artful war.  
When quiet hours of evening come  
We hear the dull pulsating drum;

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The sunset gun booms far away,—  
Down comes the flag and ends the day.  
The campfires shed their flickering light  
On tent and sentry all the night.  
Then, as the rosy hues of day  
Chase the dark shades of night away,  
When birds awake their morning cheer,  
The sunrise drum salutes the ear.  
Yet all is peace: war's work is done;  
No bush conceals a lurking gun,  
The hunter seeks the glade at will,  
The flocks are grazing on the hill,  
The groves are vocal with the stroke  
Of woodman's ax and crashing oak,  
And while the fleet rides in the bay  
There's dust and din in Monterey.

IX

Old whaling hulks, and men-of-war,  
And transports, crank with mast and spar,  
Huge store ships clustering near the mole,  
In the long swell incessant roll;  
While launch and cutter, gig and yawl,  
With mettled oarsmen, eager all  
For race, or chase, trail lines of light  
Along blue waves and crests of white:  
The challenge, shout, and victor's cheer,  
And throbbing oar locks thrill the ear,  
As the tough oarblades bend and gleam  
And vex the water's closing seam.  
Along the sloping, wave-worn beach

Where seaweeds toss and ear shells bleach,  
The sand is flecked with squads of tars,  
And water casks, and shapely spars  
Fresh from the grove where late they grew  
And drank the rains and mountain dew.  
The armorer's forge, the cooper's tent,—  
Crude artisans on frolic bent,—  
White hammocks drying,—rattling near  
The rope-walk's busy notes of cheer,  
And furzy brooms, and fuel piled,  
Provoke the seaboy's gambols wild—  
Right glad to leave the tossing bay  
To share the workmen's holiday,  
Refitting every waste and wear  
Of wind's and wave's incessant war.  
O welcome labor! happy change  
From narrow ship: sensation strange,  
The still, firm earth, to see, to feel  
Beneath our feet,—no heaving keel  
And ceaseless motion's twist and roll  
Tiring the body, tiring soul!  
Welcome the step on solid shore—  
The tasks that eager tars implore!  
These sounds of toil to us are gay—  
There's music now in Monterey!

## X

When morning airs grew soft and warm,  
Pressed down the bay a finny swarm,  
Vast as the sands that gem the shore,—  
Millions propelling millions more!

And still they come, an army strong,  
Pouring their tide for hours along,  
Changing the water's glassy green  
To purple streaks with ink between.  
A gleam! a flash! again! again!  
Like firefly's sparks in summer glen,  
Reveal the strife of fin and scale  
When hungry foes the swarm assail,  
None fiercer than the shark whose war  
Forever feeds a hungry maw.  
"Ho! fishermen all! Away! Away!"  
Down drop the boats, for sportive fray,  
By seamen manned of age and skill  
Gained in Newfoundland's waters chill,  
Off Labrador, in Irish seas,  
Or stormy shoals of Hebrides,  
Where ocean's finny nations swarm,  
And men contend with cold and storm.  
The boats are stored with lead and line,  
And seine to sweep the teeming brine,—  
Fixtures complete in every part  
To bring success to fisher's art.  
With skilful hands the net is flung,—  
Like beads upon the water strung  
The jetty cork buoys toss and play  
Till all are out. "Oarsmen, give way!"  
Shoreward the boats excited drive  
And slowly drag the meshy hive  
Till on the beach's floor of sand  
The boat's keel grates: all spring to land—  
And tug and haul: the floundering spoil,  
Piled heaps on heaps, repays the toil.

## XI

So half in earnest, half in play,  
We whiled the weary days away;  
We fished with lines for golden bass,  
Picked muscles from the salt sea grass;  
Along the beach's foamy swell  
We gathered many a priceless shell,  
Twisted and bent with curious curl,—  
Inlaid with ruby, emerald, pearl;  
We watched the breaker's foamy spray,  
The land bird's flight, the seagull's play,  
The old dull town, that duller grew,  
Till all were starved for something new.  
Five tedious months lapsed slow away,  
Our flukes still rusted in the clay;  
But once upon the bow they hung,  
And once aloose our sails were flung,  
To break the spiritless blockade  
And San Francisco's bay invade,—  
A quiet basin, vast and deep,  
Sheltered by hills that round it sweep,  
Secure from storm, of ample space  
The world's armadas to embrace.  
Brief was the solace granted here,—  
More meagre still the hamlet's cheer.  
Our homesick men, each weary day,  
Fretted and chafed the hours away,  
Now trusting rumor's flattering tongue,  
And now by disappointment stung;  
Old Tantalus no torture knew  
More keen than that which teased our crew.

## XII

Strange lives we lead: the seaworn tar  
Greets the land's outline from afar  
As homesick schoolboy greets his home,—  
Yet e'er the new moon fills her dome,  
His chronic restlessness returns,—  
The quiet harbor's lee he spurns:  
Unblest alike on sea or land,  
His anchor clasps no friendly strand.  
Who tempted first the stormy tide!  
Who ventured first on waters wide  
Beyond the quiet, landlocked bay,  
And saw the billows leap and play,—  
Saw storm arise and coming night,  
And naught but sea and sky in sight?  
Who, shipwrecked once, again would dare  
To risk his life and fortune there?  
Bold was the man, of nervy frame!  
Alas! who knows his royal name?  
Hail! noble tar, in lonely grave,  
Untamed in death by wrecking wave;  
Thy words of hope to living men  
Inspire the risk of storm again!  
Wrecked, buried on a stormy coast,  
A sailor says, "When we were lost,  
Full many a bark outrode the gale;  
O gallant tars! be brave! set sail!"  
Aye, Aye, brave soul! while winds blow free  
A kindred race shall sail the sea,—  
All storms defy, all perils brave,



To find, at last, like thee, a grave.  
And thou, Orion! ill-starred man,  
Pursued by fate's disastrous ban,  
In whelming billows overthrown  
With all thy mates, save two alone  
Cast with thee on the seething strand,  
Bruised, bleeding, blinded, choked with sand,  
Scarce knowing whether life or death  
Gave or withheld thy halting breath,—  
O stranded tar, forlornly brave,  
Still wilt thou tempt the cruel wave?  
Our answer is, the tumbling foam  
That rolls above thy silent home!  
Thy sails were set for India's sea—  
They entered dim eternity!

## XIII

And thou too hail! old sailor true,  
And soldier, chief in hazards new,—  
Sir Gilbert of the Golden Hind,  
Of sturdy courage, manly mind,  
Conning thy book with heart aglow  
While gained the fatal leak below,  
And conscious still that, o'er the foam,  
Waited for thee thy English home,—  
Thy noble oaks, thy fair demesne,  
Thy blushing roses, ivies green,  
And loving eyes that watched to see  
Thy home-bound sails and welcome thee.  
Thy last known words of trust sublime,

A triumph peal o'er death and time.  
"As near is heaven by sea as land,"  
He said, and sank, with all his band!  
What wealth of manhood sleeps below  
The everlasting billows' flow!  
What valor, faith, achievement high,  
Lost to the world when heroes die!

## XIV

O Colon! more than mortal brave  
Thy challenge of the unknown wave,  
While all the world, in scoffing tone,  
Reviled thy faith that stood alone,  
While pedants conjured false alarms,  
And mutiny rose up in arms!  
O Colon! strong thy sailor soul  
To breast so long old ocean's roll,  
All landmarks gone! no sight, no sign,  
To mark thy pathway on the brine!  
Above a sky, below a realm  
That tests thy power of sail and helm  
Through days and nights that endless seem,  
Still loyal to thy splendid dream!  
What though no sign of land appeared,  
Still on! right on! thy bark was steered!  
What though the wasteful Ocean Sea  
No bounds revealed; thy firm decree  
Was ever on! right on! thy soul  
Outflew all space to reach thy goal.  
O gallant chief! what mind can know

## The Blockade

III

Thy secret struggles, nights of wo,  
Thy breadth of vision, power of will,  
Thy faith that, baffled, triumphed still!  
In darkest hour tamed angry men,  
And turned them to their tasks again,  
Recounting all good omens o'er  
Till gleamed the light on Salvador!  
A ray that gilds thy deathless name,  
And crowns thee with a hero's fame!  
Still lives thy thrill as seaman turns  
His eye where home's clear beacon burns!  
And yet a thousand times more blest  
The one who finds his spirit's rest  
By sparkle led, on unseen shore,  
That, once beheld, shines evermore!

## XV

The sailor spirit latent lies  
In every heart; few only rise  
From life's inertia strong to hold  
Their steadfast way through stormy world.  
Bid memory wake! recall the scene  
Of children on a village green,  
Prostrate, and gazing on the sky,  
And saying,—“O that I could fly!”  
They watch the glorious clouds that sail  
So grandly on the summer gale,  
And feel their pulses quicker play  
Half trusting that some coming day  
Shall give the wondrous power to rise

And float, and sail, through happy skies,  
Finding in that ethereal blue  
Pleasures that mortals never knew.  
O happy childhood! whence the power  
To clothe with rapture such an hour;  
To revel in the splendid scene  
Imagined on a village green!  
The child's glad soul is free as air;  
He does what manhood may not dare;  
No early wounds their hold maintain  
With undertone of endless pain;  
No weight of memory bears him down  
With bitter thought of blessings flown;  
No leaden past, of wrong and sin,  
Stirs up a mutiny within.  
All life is focussed on the hour  
That manifests the mighty power  
To rise, to float in space away  
In one prolonged, enraptured day,  
As far as thought or will can last,  
Unfettered by a solemn past.  
And O! the splendor of that sail  
On airy clouds and fancy's gale!

## XVI

In thoughtful mood I too recline,  
I feel the lift of heaving brine  
And gaze away through deep blue sky,  
And see the cloud fleets sailing by:  
With more than childhood's strong desire

I feel my burning thoughts aspire  
 To join that fleet and bear away  
 Beyond the utmost bounds of day!  
 Ho! stout three-deckers! squadrons strong  
 That all your spacious seaway throng,—  
 Do spirits man your airy spars,  
 And set your sails, and con your stars?  
 Does conscious mind float far and free  
 Through happy morning's rosy sea,  
 Through evening's waves of molten gold  
 Where secrecies of heaven unfold?  
 O happy sailors, freed from time  
 And conscious all of power sublime,—  
 No cloud can dim your youthful eye,  
 No tempest mar your radiant sky,  
 No lightning blast: no wave conceal  
 The reef to crush your heaving keel!  
 Safely ye sail through ether's glow,  
 The world of waters rolled below;  
 Safely ye sail through vistas grand  
 That vast as endless space expand!  
 Ye come from realms beyond our sight,  
 Ye span the heavens and pass to night—  
 No night for you! when day is done  
 Your pilots seek the blazing sun!  
 Ye feel his all-transforming power—  
 Put on the radiance of the hour  
 In gorgeous hues that know no name—  
 The fleets of all the heavens aflame!  
 A happy haven ye have found,  
 O gallant squadron, glory crowned!  
 Does conscious mind that glory share?

## 114      Afloat With Old Glory

Would God that I were with you there!  
The child is happy in his dream,  
I only think: things only seem;  
My barren fancy brings no joy;  
Its vague delusions quickly cloy,—  
For memory's leaden ballast clings  
Disastrous to my spirit's wings:  
I'm anchored to a fateful past,—  
In vain I struggle: O how vast  
The blessed land of—Might-have-been!  
Would God that I had entered in!  
Is there some sea where spirits sail,—  
Where all is safe: the happy gale  
Blows only to that peaceful shore  
Where souls rejoice forevermore?  
Then O my soul! arise and flee  
For safety to that tranquil sea!

## XVII

What is this mystery called time,  
So slowly doled by shipbell's chime,  
When weary watch lags on at night,—  
When weary days prolong the light,  
While longing souls invoke, implore  
Some good that lingers evermore?  
What is this thing called time that flies  
Like sunset hues from tropic skies,  
When pleasure wields her subtle power  
To glorify a fleeting hour?  
Few pleasures cheered our weary stay,—



Remote, unknown, our sailing day,—  
 More blank, more dreary was the time  
 The nearer came that joy sublime!  
 Remote, unknown, the date supreme  
 Of waking from life's troubled dream,  
 The hour that smites with blasting light  
 The phantoms of life's dreary night,  
 And renders clear to purblind eye  
 The tangled lines of mystery.  
 So mortals dream, yet swift as light  
 Splendor pursues departing night,  
 And hastens that supernal day.—  
 While blind men chafe at time's delay.  
 As blind our tars, unconscious all  
 Of good or ill that might befall;  
 The present brought no happy boon,—  
 The future loomed with fate unknown.

## XVIII

But all things earthly have an end,—  
 O blissful truth when fears impend!  
 The boatswain's pipe with piercing scream  
 Dispelled our melancholic dream,—  
 With frenzy fired each heart and brain,  
 As joined each mate the glad refrain!  
 "All hands up anchor!" thrilling sound!  
 "Up anchor all!" we're homeward bound!"  
 A burst of joy! a shout! a cheer!  
 And orders hoarse perplex the ear;  
 Then slowly lull as if each brain

Bewildered, sought the sound again!  
An instant more and, wild and high,  
Burst forth again the joyful cry!  
From deck to deck, above, below,  
Forward and aft the accents go,—  
The frantic shout of homesick men  
Wild with the dream of home again!  
Then trampling feet, and rattling gear,  
And orders hoarse perplex the ear.  
Their liveliest air the bandsmen play;  
The capstan spins; besmeared with clay  
Our anchors rise and catted swing;  
Aloft the topmen nimbly spring—  
Responsive to the trumpet's bray—  
“Let fall! Sheet home! Quick, hoist away!”  
Down rolled a glorious canvas cloud  
On mast, and spar, and stay, and shroud,  
Filled by the wind that seaward blew,  
While boomed our guns their last adieu!

## HOMeward BOUND

### I

No dull regret, with leaden hand,  
Reached outwards from the sinking land,  
To tug at heavy heart and brain  
As when home sinks below the main.  
The heart is where its treasures gleam;  
In empty lands hope builds no dream!  
The hills recede, the waters rise  
And lap with myriad tongues the skies;  
In solemn loneliness the pall  
Of ocean's night envelopes all.  
Swift through the waste of wave and dark  
The night wind crowds our peopled ark,  
A triumph of man's daring will,—  
O miracle of mortal skill!  
On tranquil sea, on angry tide,  
Alike the tars in thee confide!  
No tranquil sea inspires a song,—  
The winds are piping loud and strong,  
The mighty billows heave and foam,—  
Vast is the waste, and far our home!

### II

Where leads our path, O landsman wise,  
Safe in your cultured paradise,

Sheltered, and roofed, and girdled round  
With every comfort wealth has found;  
Anchored secure by singing rills,  
And circled by eternal hills,—  
Pictures that graced youth's happy time,  
Nor changed their color in thy prime;  
Where stream, and wood, and rock, and glade,  
In outline clear of light and shade,  
Familiar grown as face of friend,  
Your waking thoughts and dreams attend?  
Always the same, yet always new,—  
The circling world that meets your view,—  
The wintry glory, hills of snow,  
And shadows vast of pines below,—  
The icelocked streams, the marble lake;  
Can power supreme their torpor break?  
Behold the change! each flinty band,  
Touched by the springtime's gentle hand,  
Withdraws its grasp: the rushing rills  
To music wake the dull gray hills,—  
The birds return: the grass and flowers  
Respond to May's reviving showers.  
O peerless birth from winter's tomb!  
A prodigy of green and bloom!  
Of blushing fruits, of rustling corn,  
That earth's rough lineaments adorn—  
All ending in the heartfelt praise  
Of golden autumn's harvest days;  
A maze of miracles sublime  
That glorify the scenes of time!

## III

While pomps like these beguile your eyes,  
Where lies the path, O landsman wise,  
That we pursue, by night, by day,  
Through winds and waters boistrous play?  
What opening blooms, what dreamy maze  
Of netted thicket lures our gaze?  
Or meadows spread by cot and mill,  
Or wood that broods the quiet hill,  
Or mountains vast that sweep and climb  
Through cloudy heights in space sublime?  
In vain we gaze: the hungry eye,  
Like Noah's dove, no land can spy,—  
But deserts vast of rolling blue:  
Old ocean's billows in review—  
Alone reward the fasting gaze  
Through double Lent of eighty days.  
To him who basks in sunny land,  
A summer's marvels all expand  
While still we carve the circling sea,—  
Our bounds the same, ahead, alee;  
The springing corn, the blade, the ear,  
And golden kernels all appear,  
While trails our bark her foamy wake  
From San Francisco's quiet lake  
To Valparaiso's bay that flings  
Wide its glad arms and "Welcome!" sings!

## IV

Familiar sights and sounds again  
Imperil our hilarious men

As, free from watching, toil and care,  
They breathe the seaport's tainted air—  
More fatal than the storm, or steel,  
Or jagged rock beneath our keel.  
O manhood's prime! O youthful bloom!  
Why so in haste to find thy tomb?  
Why dally with thy deadliest foe?  
Why headlong crowd the gates of wo?  
O why within the poison bowl  
Drown thought and sense, kill life and soul?  
O memory! in thy pictured hall  
Are scenes that still my soul appal;  
The sickening sights when reckless men  
Spur passion on with flowing rein—  
Insensate oaths, and drunken strife,  
The demon clutch at throat and life,  
The idiot's leer, delirium's glare,  
Shrieks that portend the soul's despair,  
Gibber of fiends, infuriate yell  
Extorted by the pangs of hell!  
O memory cease! Come Lethe kind  
And blot these tortures from my mind:  
The painful sense of blight and loss,—  
The fine gold turned to worthless dross,—  
Fair manhood, worth and virtue, gone:  
The mother would not know her son,  
So deep the brand of shame and sin  
Has burnt its grinning outlines in.  
Consoling thought! no mother's ken  
Shall greet those blasted forms again:  
The ocean's depths, or potter's field,  
Their wretched sepulchre shall yield,



While loving kindred wait and pray  
Where babbling tongues no tales convey!  
Thus faith preserves the vision fair,  
Of virtue, truth, and promise rare,  
That on youth's hopeful days attend  
Unconscious of the hopeless end.  
Kind is thy task, O speechless grave,  
Though mother's heart thy secret crave!

## V

Again the Boatswain's silver call  
Cut the keen air: "Up anchor all!"  
Each burly mate the husky note  
Rolled hoarsely from his bellowing throat.  
Each ready ear the signal knew,  
Each sailor to his station flew.  
The drum and fife, with brisk refrain,  
Charmed the huge anchor's dripping chain  
That, snakelike, through the hawse pipe sped  
And brought the anchor from its bed,  
With flukes piled high with plastic clay  
And shells, and seaweed from the bay.  
A volumn vast of canvas rolled  
From yard and stay in ample fold,  
And fore and aft, above, below,  
The black spars spread their wings of snow  
O victory of mortal power!  
O joy supreme, the golden hour,  
When the last anchor quits the ground,  
And swelling sails speed, homeward bound!

What lies before our dashing prow,  
O curious school boy! answer now,  
As, spurning thus the quiet bay  
We plunge into the tingling spray,  
And heave and roll in hissing foam  
That boils around our tossing home?  
Thou too must sail life's stormy sea;  
What harbor's light shall welcome thee?

## VI

The hills dissolved,—again the gale  
Smote the tense shrouds with shriek and wail;  
The sunset's wake illumed the plain,  
Blue sea routine returned again.  
A month went by and wind and wave  
Of drenching spray their tribute gave  
As nearer drew the southern bourne  
Of rival seas, far-famed Cape Horn!  
Far famed Cape Horn! to seaman's ear  
A name of dread,—a haunting fear,—  
Symbol of danger, pain, and toil,—  
Ice seas from which the brave recoil,—  
Long nights of darkness, snow and hail,  
Whose ordeal bids the sternest quail.  
We saw the Cape, in distance dim,  
Rise cone-like on the water's rim,—  
A mountain in the deep sea hurled,  
To mark the bound of southern world  
Yet off that Cape no tempest blew  
With vapors dense of ocean dew,

But sunny skies and sprightly air,  
And playful breezes, light and fair,  
That swept us past the dreaded Horn  
With studding sails and royals on!

## VII

The sun had reached its utmost goal,  
And circled round the southern pole,  
When our huge bows, unswerving still,  
Went plunging through those waters chill.  
Each day the lengthening hours of light  
Encroached upon the bounds of night,  
And every clue to passing time  
Seemed all at fault. The shipbell's chime  
Marked midnight hours while still the rays  
Of twilight met our dubious gaze,  
And, slowly stealing, clear and fair  
On sky and sea, the ruddy glare  
Of sunrise glories, e'er the bell  
Announced the morning watch's knell.

## VIII

But changes came, above, below,—  
Who can foretell what winds may blow?  
What fortune waits, what fates abide  
Mortals who tempt the fickle tide?

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Through rolling tides we floundered on,  
By gales and vagrant breezes borne,—  
Through dripping fog-banks brooding low,—  
Through spiteful squalls of sticky snow,—  
Through islands vast of dreamy haze,  
And purest ether's blinding daze.  
The wayward sea was changeful too  
Revealing in its mirror true,  
In shadows dark, the stormy sky,  
The deep blue vault of wondrous dye,—  
The sober gray—each starry gem  
Of solemn midnight's diadem.  
Along our wake, in frantic glee,  
White sea-birds held wild revelry,—  
A bevy vast, on ample wing,  
In sweep, and curve, and airy ring,—  
Now drenched by jets of tossing spray,—  
Now upward mounting, swift! away!  
Strange spirit birds! In sailor's creed  
Unpardoned is the wanton deed  
That mars the wing-kept jubilee  
Of birds that cheer the lonely sea.  
Our greybeard tars sedately tell  
Of storms and wreckings that befel  
The luckless bark whose fated wood  
Was stained with Albatross's blood!  
A weird and kindred race are ye—  
O sailors of the air—and sea!  
Delusion, this? Since Noah's day  
Bird-signs have marked man's dubious way;  
Wise nations' mighty secrets cling,  
Auspicious, to an airy wing!

## IX

Becalmed we lay one glorious night  
Beneath the full moon's flooding light;  
The wondrous plain of molten gold,  
In broken flakes of lustre rolled,  
Brighter than Arctic flames aspire—  
A sea of glass and mingled fire!  
On either beam, ahead, astern,  
Where'er the ravished eye could turn,  
The glassy sea's reflection blazed  
Till eyes grew weary as they gazed,—  
So vast the realm of living flame  
That, undulating, went and came.  
O why such waste of splendor given!  
That flashing sea, that spangled heaven,—  
That realm of living glory—why—  
Beyond the gaze of mortal eye?

## X

Two months went by: the friendly breeze  
Swept our swift keel through warmer seas;  
Past Falkland Islands, cold and rude,—  
Past many a seagirt solitude,—  
Past wide La Plata—Silver Stream!  
Old Spanish cruiser's happy dream!  
Still on, and on, till softer skies  
And northern constellations rise,  
And dimly traced, the western wave  
A sight of Rio's landmark gave,—

Cape Frio rough whose rocky mole  
With thunder greets the billow's roll.  
We gazed the midwatch hours away,  
Lured by dim lights that starred the bay,  
Hungry to see the day's return,  
And sunlit waters flash and burn.  
We braced our yards,—the seabreeze blew—  
Along the Rolling Ground we flew,  
Past Razor Island, Light-House Tower,—  
At torrid moontide's sultry hour  
The tiny rainbow's transient tinge  
Spanned the huge anchor's mighty plunge!

## XI

Still, still the same, O matchless bay!  
Thy round of martial pageantry,—  
Thy trim and bannered men-of-war,  
With daring length of mast and spar,—  
Thy spiteful cannons' sharp report,  
As ship greets ship, or booming fort,—  
Thy gallant boats that flash and glide  
Athwart the harbor's glassy tide,—  
Visits of state and proud display  
From high officials, starred and gay,—  
Attended each with spangled suite  
And din of echoing salute,—  
Above, around, the glorious sweep  
Of mountains piled in crescent deep,  
That to the glittering bay look down  
On pomp that shames old world renown.



How swiftly time has hurried on!  
Full thirty months have come and gone  
Since pressed our ship this glassy tide—  
A peerless bay, a nation's pride—  
And we delighted ear and eye  
On sights and sounds that never die.  
Since then our buoyant sails, unfurled,  
Have swept us round the rolling world!  
Yet our good ship, her pennon blue  
Floats in this warlike retinue,  
As staunch, and trim, and proud, as when  
She passed beyond Old Rio's ken!

## XII

All things allure, yet short our stay;  
Our homesick hearts brook no delay;  
For through the future's veil appears  
Love's beaming eyes, and joyful tears,  
And welcome smile, and greeting hand,  
That speed us to our native land.  
Our gallant ship the signal knew,—  
Spread her white wings and seaward flew,  
As homeward speeds the carrier dove  
On pinions swift of hope and love.  
Our bows in smothering foam went down,—  
Foam white as snowdrift's curling crown,—  
Turned back the tide with hiss and roar,  
And through the waves a pathway tore.  
O sight that bids the pulses fly!  
An open sea! a cloudless sky!  
A noble ship! a spanking gale!

That tests each thread of straining sail;  
Around, the wide spread, shoreless plain,—  
Blue as the azure's deepest stain!  
A million billows capped with white,  
Sparkling in midday's lustrous light!  
Breaking in jets of diamond spray,  
Borne on the gale, aloft! away!  
And timed in perfect order all,  
The rising deck, its measured fall—  
'Tis sound and motion's rhythmic charm,  
When ocean chants his choral psalm!  
'Tis transport when chimes with the sound,  
The sailor's heart-beat, homeward bound!

## XIII

Fair blew the wind,—the friendly sea  
In foamy wreaths swept far alee:  
Still warmer grew the sunny air,  
And midnight hours as Eden fair.  
Still onward swept our tireless wings,  
As cloudlet to its pathway clings,  
Across the line whose unseen band  
Divides earth's central sea and land;  
Through wastes of weed-strewn tides that bore  
Relics of flood and ravaged shore,  
Where Amazon his tribute gave,—  
A volume vast, to ocean's wave.  
We watched the compass, watched the sea,—  
Strange that for once old salts agree!  
It seemed a world of sailor lore  
Illumed our tars, unknown before,

We counted days that fewer grew,—  
Our reckoning every ship-boy knew,—  
The nearest land the cook could tell,—  
The rate we sailed declare as well;  
Marines could mark the northern star  
Slow rising on the watery bar,—  
Dear to each heart as lighthouse ray,—  
Home's landmark true to all who stray.

## XIV

Familiar signs to seaman's eye  
Reveal the tropic islands nigh:  
The tradewind's power began to fail,  
Light breezes baffled helm and sail,  
Squalls tore in shreds the glistening plain,  
And torrents fell of welcome rain;  
Vast gulf weed meads, a floating field,  
Sargasso's tepid sea revealed;  
In beds and islands vast they lay,—  
A steaming growth of tropic ray;  
Beyond the maintop lookout's ken,  
Stretched the wide waste of weedy fen;  
A million birds, in airy play,  
Above, around, kept holiday,  
None loving life with heartier cheer  
Than Mother Carey's chickens dear

## XV

One morning sun rose cold and dim  
Above the water's misty rim,

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Low, brooding fogs around us spread,  
Our friendly breezes all were dead.  
The short-chopped sea, by instinct true,  
At once each greybeard seaman knew;  
The welcome Gulf Stream's tepid tides  
Were lapping at our floundering sides,  
And sweeping on, with silent flow,  
Past Hatteras Cape of rolling snow.  
What means that earnest, wistful gaze,  
As, peering through the ashy haze,  
The lookout strains his weary eye,  
Some dim and distant form to spy?  
Unreal all these portents seem!  
Or is it but some midwatch dream,—  
Some drowsy picture on the brain  
That, once disturbed, comes not again?  
Not faith or sight can credence lend  
That ocean paths can have an end,  
Till memory's eye, in swift review,  
Flashes like light our voyage through.

XVI

The vast Atlantic's waves are spanned,—  
The Indian's billows, broad and grand,—  
The wide Pacific's glassy plain  
Twice have we traversed—and again,—  
Stormy Good Hope, the Rocky Horn  
Are both of threatening danger shorn;  
Our keel has cut earth's central line  
Six times, as knife divides the twine.

The wind, storm, lightning, hail, and rain,  
Of icy clime and torrid main,  
Our noble vessel's strength have tried,  
Yet still she rides the throbbing tide—  
Queen of the sea! Thy crystal throne  
And watery realm are all thine own!  
O noble ship! each timber strong,  
And mast, and spar, inspires my song!  
I love thee well from truck to keel!  
O who can tell the pride I feel  
For thee, thou well-tried, faithful friend,  
First, last, and always, to the end!  
Hail, noble ship! while memory clings  
To all the past and pensive sings  
Of my weird dream on dangerous main,  
Thy name, *Columbus!* wakes the strain!

## XVII

Keen did the icy north wind blow,  
White with sharp flakes of blinding snow,  
Chilling our limbs with frosty spray—  
So lately warmed by tropic ray.  
When neared our ship the offing wide  
That drinks the Atlantic's rising tide,—  
As clung the lookout to the shrouds,  
Peering through winter's angry clouds,—  
A tiny sail, in outline dim,  
Shot from the water's hazy rim—  
In build and rig as fair a gem  
As graces ocean's frothy hem.  
A moment more a welcome hail

Broke from the craft of tiny sail,  
As round our stern she cleft her way  
And backed her sail beneath our lee.  
Swift through the decks the tidings flew;  
A crowd around the gangway drew,  
And never lover's flashing eye  
Sparkled at sight of maiden nigh,  
As flashed their eyes when, kindling warm,  
They met the pilot's manly form.  
But not the pilot's practiced skill,  
Nor sail, nor helm, nor sailor's will,  
Can land a single restless tar  
Till flood-tide bears us past the bar.

## XVIII

So while, impatient of delay,  
We chide the tardy hours away,  
Our perils, toils, and watchings done,  
Long weary years of voyaging gone,  
Our human hearts with instinct true  
Turn warmly toward our well-tried crew,  
So soon to be, like snowflakes driven,  
All scattered to the winds of heaven.  
Could truthful fancy follow on  
The path each wanderer's footsteps run,  
What martyr's roll could match the tale  
Of men whom countless foes assail?  
'Tis well no anxious, prying eye,  
Fate's book of secrets may descry;  
That none may know what ills impend,—  
What slip shall bring the solemn end.



Some, spell-bound by their vagrant ways,  
Will thread the wide world's endless maze  
Till, in some lone and savage isle  
Where never shone a Christian smile,  
Uncheered by face of tender friend,  
They meet their prayerless, Christless end.  
And some will plow the treacherous wave  
Till sink they in the sailor's grave.  
But O how few will seek the ways  
Of peaceful home's unsullied days,  
Though strong resolves and plans are made,  
Like others doomed, alas! to fade.  
Without some hope to cheer him on,  
Of solace when his toils are done,  
How could men live? How bear life's load  
And crush of toil,—the despot's goad,—  
The everlasting grind and strife  
That eat away the life of life—  
Vain hope! that like a witch's charm  
Lures ever far from rest and calm,  
Till life is spent—hope's vision flies—  
Despair and death their latest prize.  
Pass from these decks eight hundred men:  
Say! will they ever meet again?  
Will autumn leaves when sere and dry  
Again adorn their native tree?  
The silver from Potosi's mine  
Again in virgin ore combine?  
Will men who fell on battle plain  
Greet with glad voice their homes again?  
Aye! when revive those heroes slain  
Then will our crew all meet again!

## XIX

O who a mariner would be!  
No rest is his on land or sea.  
Home's quiet charms delight him not,  
No love of woman cheers his lot.  
No social charm of early friends  
His life's declining day attends.  
The fatal choice once made, in vain  
He seeks life's vantage to regain;  
His place once missed—gone fortune's day—  
A thing misplaced he drifts away,  
Where change, and want, and wreck, and storm,  
Combine against his shrinking form;  
He seems a mindless atom hurled  
On aimless errand through the world.  
Conflicting motives, chance and fate,  
The willing conscripts congregate  
Within a warship's narrow bound  
Where Babel tongues all speech confound,  
And races, ranks and habitude  
But fuel seem for ceaseless feud.  
Time flies: routines resistless sway,—  
Care, toil, and danger, sportive play,—  
While none suspect the silent change,—  
Mold in one mass the mixture strange;  
One life inspires, one moving soul  
Thrills every heart and sways the whole.  
Behold the end! The subtle band  
Melts as their footsteps press the land;  
One hour undoes the work of years,—

A hazy dream the past appears;  
Bygones are gone! away we fly  
Beyond all trace of mortal eye,  
Each eager to renew the strife  
In some new phase of sailor life,  
Heedless of the divine decree—  
“Lo!—there is sorrow on the sea,”—  
Till youth, and hope, and life are flown,  
All mingling in the dread unknown.

## XX

And yet perchance in years to come,  
When many a shipmate's voice is dumb,  
In some thronged mart, or foreign port,  
Or inland town, or strange resort,  
A well-known face will greet the eyes  
And wake the heartbeat's glad surprise,—  
A thrilling sense of old-time joy,—  
We clasp and cry,—“What cheer, my boy!”  
Words waken thought, a glittering chain,—  
The dim past springs to life again,  
And well-known scenes of perished days  
Float up to meet the fervid gaze,  
As vivid, fresh, and real all  
As time had bid the years' recall.

## XXI

What craft bears down with friendly hail?  
Hurrah! it brings a lusty mail,

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With tidings fresh and words of cheer,—  
The spirit of a lifeless year,—  
A photograph of what was done,  
Said, thought, and planned, beneath the sun.  
Best boon of all, from homes appear  
Missives that summon joy and fear  
To grapple in a dubious strife  
For lordship in a mortal's life.  
What guided,—instinct, fate, or chance,  
First to that line, my eager glance?  
“Died: Lucy,”—place, and day, and hour,—  
“Her age, sixteen!” I read no more!  
The day is dark,—the future dead;  
Its plans, hopes, prospects, all are fled:  
The past alone has life and power  
To vitalize the palsied hour.  
The undertone of all my song  
No earthly power can now prolong,  
Or send a single friendly ray  
To pierce the gloom that dims the day.

### XXII

What vision rare awoke the strain,  
And tinged its theme with joy and pain,  
So persevering, time nor place  
Its constant presence could efface?  
What subtile power with clinging hand  
So bound me to my native land,—  
In spite of need, desire and will,  
And held me there a captive still,

Its mighty secret covered o'er  
With silence deep as ocean's floor?  
What lured my fancy far away  
O'er watery deserts, day by day,  
As though a wandering thought could find  
Solace in somewhat left behind,  
Or reach the lost, as swimmer's hand  
At night might clutch the welcome sand?  
What shaped so oft the vivid dream  
Of homes old scenes, the fireside's gleam,  
Of faces, forms, of happy tone  
Of singer's voice that, heard alone  
When scores of merry voices blend,  
The raptured thoughts alone attend?  
When splendor gleamed on land and sea,  
And music's tones, and sounds of glee,  
Gave life and charm to novel scene,—  
What other vision slid between  
The gazing eye, the listening ear,  
That could not see, that could not hear,  
So eager was the rival power  
To dominate the passing hour?  
The far-away was real then;  
The present was the phantom scene!  
When hunger gnawed at strength and life,  
And slow disease maintained the strife,  
And death his victims captive led,—  
Whence came the whisper—"Light ahead!"  
A film of fancy, undefined,—  
A happy hope that pleased the mind,—  
As thin as air on mountains cold,—  
As iron cable strong to hold,

With power resistless, heart and will  
Obedient to its bidding still;  
A force that mastered thought and life,  
Despite all rivals' secret strife,  
And held perforce the willing soul  
Exultant in its blest control!  
All that is past! the spell is dead;  
Away the mocking mirage fled;  
As sailor starts at morning gun  
From happy dreams I wake undone  
And feel my doom's resistless shock  
As billow feels the headland rock!  
My world in ruins!—what for me  
Shall the mysterious future be?  
For me alone the secret hides,—  
Alone I watch time's changing tides.  
Can that bright world my skilful brain  
Outlined so fair return again?  
From the poor wreckage of the storm  
The stranded tar a raft may form  
Again to dare the faithless sea  
And such perforce my lot must be,—  
For I life's stormy sea must sail—  
A Power Divine must give the gale,—  
The chart and compass till the shore  
Gleams where sea-billows beat no more.

## XXIII

What sound is that?—a roar of steam  
Rudely dispels my sober dream,  
And lo! two tugs of giant power,—  
One on each beam! The final hour



So long delayed at last is come!  
It calls in the perturbing drum,—  
We feel it in the nervous beat  
Of symbol's clang, and tramping feet,  
And clamors rude and trumpet's bray  
And wild, unwonted disarray.  
All things proclaim our voyage done!  
All things announce new 'scenes begun!  
Through tossing craft that flecked the bay,  
Our smoky consorts' pathway lay,—  
Past island reaches, surfy shores,  
Where shells inlay the sandy floors,—  
Through Norfolk's many masted fleet,  
That hovers near the busy street,  
Through countless boats that fret the tide,  
Sail-borne, oar-driven, they past us glide,  
And ferry, dredge, and muddy scow  
That barely miss our dangerous prow,—  
Till in among the hulks we found  
Our last and long-sought anchoring ground!  
The plunging flukes have gripped the sand—  
Around us gleams Old Glory's Land!

## REMINISCENT

1900

So long ago, the joy, the toil, the strife,  
Ocean's wild moods, intrusive death and strenu-  
ous life,  
A haunting vision dim and vast appears  
Beyond the billowy roll of fifty years.

Is all evanished, dim and far away,—  
Its potency dissolved forever? Nay;—  
Through all the years their molding powers  
control  
Thought, feeling, being in the mobile soul.

Routine's resistless sway, steel-grooved,  
austere,—  
Life cosmopolitan, unique, severe,—  
The world-wide roll of waters, space and time  
Fold me, an atom, in their scheme sublime,

And bid me own a dominance supreme  
That led my pathway through young manhood's  
dream,  
Once sorely rued,—to where I wondering see  
And hail a Power Benignant guiding me.

THE END.

TWENTIETH EDITION.

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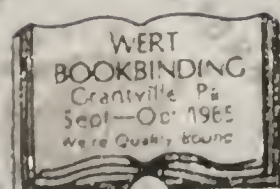
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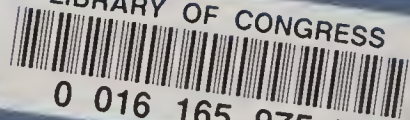






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